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Fantasy Football League Page 46

BY SUSAN BELL, ROBIN LODGE AND STEPHEN FARRELL

A map of Central Africa showing Lake Edward and Lake George. The map includes labels for CONGO, UGANDA, KAMPALA, TANZANIA, KABOLE, RWANDA, LAKE EDWARD, LAKE GEORGE, LAKE VICTORIA, LAKE KIVU, and LAKE ALBERT. A speech bubble points to Lake George with the text 'LAKE GEORGE' and 'LAKE EDWARD'.

FCO accused, page 2

The Prince of Wales and Alun Michael, the Welsh Secretary, sample the banned cut of beef yesterday in Newport although the bones are clearly visible

BY VALERIE ELLIOTT
AND MICHAEL HARVEY

The Prince seemed unconcerned by the controversy and told farmers, butchers and civic dignitaries at yesterday's launch: "I am only sorry that so many of you have had to wait in here, building up an enormous appetite whilst having to look at this huge hunk of roast beef. Shortly, you will be able to taste it like I did. It's absolutely delicious."

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BY STEWART TENDLER, PHILIP WEBSTER AND ADAM SAGE

"Terrible day: the police have arrested Man Friday"



"Terrible day: the police have arrested Man Friday"

BY JILL SHERMAN AND ALEXANDRA FREAN

both nursing and residential homes. But the 12 Commissioners were divided and two of them produced a minority report rejecting the key conclusions and calling for a less expensive solution, backed up by private insurance.

Mr Dobson called for an "informed debate" about long-term care, saying that the report made clear there was no "obvious answer" and there should be a full consultation. But he emphasised its findings say the country did not face a desperate time bomb and "that the cost of long-term care should be shared by the individual and the state" and be separated from those of board and lodging.

While refusing to rule out full funding, Mr Dobson suggested that the Government might cherry pick from the findings, choosing the cheaper options, some of which would not need legislation.

The Tories accused Mr Dobson of ducking the issue and dithering. Philip Hammond, the Opposition health spokesman, said that while the Commission had been deliberating 75,000 people had been forced to sell their homes to fund care.

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Strange question of silage provides fodder for thought

WHAT on earth was Derek Wyatt (Lab) talking about? Would the minister for tourism, Mr Wyatt asked yesterday, after "the way silage is coloured on our motorways?" The inquiry was met by a bemused rattle from MPs.

But Wyatt's indignation was not spent. "It is dirty brown. It does not give an appropriate image of new Britain."

Snatching Sittingbourne and Sheppey from the Tories in 1997, Wyatt was the thirteenth least likely new Labour MP. Now he was asking un-

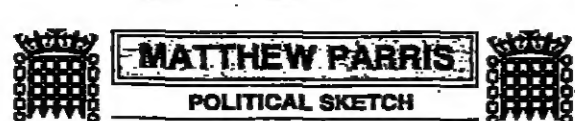
likely questions. Is our motorway system disfigured by spilt silage? Isn't silage dirty green? Can the Government change its colour?

Bald, hulking and amiable, Wyatt looks like a baby giant auk, tumbled too early from the nest. Roth's *Parliamentary Profiles* calls him "relaxed about clothes and appearance". "I'm not a suit man. I have only one." A former Oxford Rugby blue, Wyatt may have sustained one blow too many to the head, on yesterday's showing.

I certainly heard "silage".

Collective head-scratching on all sides suggested that MPs heard the same. As, surely, did the minister. Janet Anderson, stumped for a reply, she stammered that her honourable friend raised — "as ever" — the most interesting questions.

But my *Guardian* colleague thinks he heard "signage", meaning "signs", which would have made sense if it were a word. Apparently it does feature in local government dictionaries, after "new-build" and before "social mix" and "total spend". We must



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

give Wyatt the benefit of the doubt: he may be less interesting than he seemed. New Labour backbenchers are not supposed to be interesting.

Which is why Gwyneth Dunwoody (Lab, Crewe and Nantwich) comes as such a relief. The veteran "old" Labour rightwinger arrived yesterday arrayed in a new garment. A vast purple wrap, hundreds of

square yards of it, covered this substantial lady. She described the "enormous opportunities" presented by the Millennium Dome: "a great public space," she said. Ah, Gwyneth, how true: but not our greatest public space! It lends a whole new meaning to the right to roam.

And a new fascination to the concept of women's rugby.

heavily plugged yesterday by the Sports Minister Tony Banks.

For Monday mornings, Mr Banks chooses a wicked little black suit, three-piece, which he wears with a puckered face and sourly deadpan expression. Apropos of "nothing much," Mr Banks offered his congratulations "to the England women's rugby team, on their victory over Scotland". Mr Banks's felicitations will raise a cheer in the ladies' shower room.

"I was there," he declared grimly. "And it was in fact

very, very enjoyable rugby and I'd encourage people to go to women's rugby." Sadly, Mrs Dunwoody looked unconvinced.

Claire Ward seemed more game. The Labour MP for Watford was keen that Banks should promote after-school clubs. Banks said he had been impressed by these on a recent visit to Watford, a constituency foolish enough to reject him as Labour candidate in 1979.

Ms Ward, he mused, would have been seven. "Too young to vote — and too old to kiss."

Ward looked flustered by the thought.

Unflustered and benign throughout was a minister whose speech had scarcely passed the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the House, Paddy Tipping. An unpaid appointment, he is so important that new Labour's style police have not even bothered to remove his beard.

But can he make it, with that name? Paddy Tipping sounds like an alternative Saturday night sport for casual skinheads: bored with queer-bashing.

Rugged area is a haven for genocidal rebels

ONE OF the travel agencies whose tourists were attacked last night accused the Foreign Office of issuing unclear guidance, despite official warnings two weeks ago that rebel attacks and road ambushes in Uganda's northern and western districts had intensified.

The advice, issued 11 days ago, said that rebels were "periodically active" on the borders of Uganda, Congo and Rwanda, and warned "although the situation is currently peaceful, it can change quickly".

It also warned that operations by a separate rebel group infiltrating from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the Rwenzori Mountains area in the west of the country were continuing at a reduced level and that the areas of the Rwenzori Mountains, Bundibugyo and Kasese "should be avoided if possible".

However Sue Ockwell, a spokeswoman for Acadia Expeditions, complained that the advice was sometimes worded in such a way that it contained clues which had to be deciphered.

"If they mean 'Don't go', they should say 'Don't go'. It is a bit like estate agent-speak," she said.

She claimed the issue had been discussed at a meeting with the Foreign Office minis-

Tour groups demand clearer official advice, report Michael Binyon and Stephen Farrell

ter Baroness Symons a week ago. "We were told by her that there are only three and a half people manning the travel advice section. We get hundreds and hundreds of pages. It is very difficult to imagine how they can manage to handle it with such limited resources."

Yesterday the Foreign Office advice was swiftly updated: all tourists were warned not to go to the northern and western areas at all.

Visitors were strongly advised to avoid the Gulu, Kitgum and West Nile districts unless they were on urgent business, in which case they should seek local information and proceed with caution.

The kidnappings quickly stirred alarm among those familiar with the inaccessible mountainous area. It has long been the refuge of criminals, wanted men, rebel groups and, more recently, the extrem-

ist perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide killings who are determined to return to power. Some of the bloodiest and most desperate wanted men are thought to have established their bases in the area.

The main rebel group in the area is the Allied Democratic Forces, a loose alliance of former Interahamwe Hutus, responsible for the death of as many as one million Tutsis in the Rwandan genocide. They are allied with Ugandan rebels opposed to the Kampala government, supporters of former President Mobutu in Zaire and local bandits.

Numbering up to 3,000 men scattered in the mountains, they are strong enough to take on the Ugandan Army, and last year overwhelmed and briefly occupied Kasese, the main town at the foot of the mountains. They are well armed, receiving supplies from Sudan and from President Kabila's government in Congo, which is fighting rebels backed by Kampala.

Control Risks, London-based business risk advisers, said that the Ugandan Army tries to deter any tourists going to the mountains, the principal habitat of gorillas. Those that defy the warnings set up camps that are guarded only by local wardens, who could keep off poachers but would

be unable to stop well-armed guerrillas. It said the Interahamwe fighters would be unlikely to take hostages and would probably kill any Europeans they seized.

One of the only two other Britons currently missing and believed kidnapped was seized in this area by Rwandan Hutu rebels. Jason Kear, who holds dual British and New Zealand nationality, was trekking with other tourists to see gorillas on the border with Uganda and Rwanda when he was seized with a Canadian and two Swedes. The Canadian woman was released, but nothing has been heard of him since.



Dian Fossey, who spent much of her life studying gorillas in Rwanda, was believed to have been killed by poachers

GORILLAS ARE MAIN ATTRACTION FOR UGANDA TOURISTS

EVER since an unruly three-year-old gorilla called Pablo became a television star by sitting on David Attenborough in the late 1970s, thousands of tourists have made the journey to meet its relatives (Adam Sherwin writes). With the closure of the park in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo because of civil war, Uganda is the only country where tourists can find the elusive beasts.

Only 350 mountain gorillas are known to remain in Uganda's Impenetrable Forest and irresponsible tourists, desperate for a glimpse, are causing more damage to the subspecies than poaching or civil war. The number of official visiting permits has

dropped from 50 to 16, leading to a black market in tickets.

People paying £680 for the right to Ex-Ex will often bribe the wardens permits that normally cost £150 per visit have changed hands for £1,000.

Tourists head for Bwindi, in the remote southwest corner of Uganda, near the border with the Congo and Rwanda, home to the majority of the animals. Another 100 live 50 miles away in the Virungas, a chain of mainly extinct volcanoes on the Congo and Rwanda border where Dian Fossey, of *Gorillas in the Mist* fame, lived and worked for 13 years until she was killed, probably by poachers, in 1985.

Lawyers demand action over costs

BY FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 100 solicitors will attend a crisis meeting at the Law Society today to demand action over a multimillion-pound shortfall in the fund that pays out on negligence claims.

Some solicitors are facing rises of up to 100 per cent in their compulsory insurance premiums to meet the shortfall of some £360 million, which they say will push up legal fees to the public. The shortfall has arisen because of incompetent conveyancing solicitors in the late 1980s when the housing market collapsed.

More than 100 solicitors are calling on the Law Society to allow them to obtain their professional insurance cover on the open market. At present all law firms have to pay the premiums of the Solicitors' Indemnity Insurance Fund which is some £433 million in the red. Some 100 law firms have called a special general meeting to force the Law Society's hand. There will also be a special council meeting today by the Law Society's governing body to decide what action to take.

The Indemnity Fund cautions against the lure of the open market. While premiums might at first be low, they could rapidly rise if the market changes, it says. Elizabeth Mullins, managing director, said the open market was unlikely to provide the extent of cover provided by the Fund.

Older teachers 'too expensive'

BY JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

MIDDLE-AGED teachers are being frozen out of the job market as schools opt for newly qualified staff to help balance their budgets, new figures have shown.

More than 8,000 people were seeking teaching jobs in mainstream schools while claiming state benefits last month even though there were up to 3,000 vacancies in England and Wales. Up to half of them were in their forties and fifties.

The number of teaching vacancies has been rising steadily throughout the 1990s, although last year's total of 2,521 still re-

presented less than 0.7 per cent of the full complement in state schools. Secondary schools struggled to find suitable candidates in foreign languages, mathematics and some science subjects.

However, new statistics from the Employment Service show that more than 16,000 teachers are seeking work in primary or secondary schools. Although some are newly qualified graduates, fewer than 4,000 are in their twenties.

The largest group, at more than 4,600, are in their forties. Most are thought to have taken early retirement and are hoping to supplement their income through temporary teaching work. Their lengthy

service makes them expensive to employ permanently. Difficulties experienced by older applicants has led to the formation of the Association of Teachers Against Ageism. Harry Harris, its treasurer, said: "This is not just a problem in teaching, but it is particularly serious in schools."

Stephen Hillier, the Teacher Training Agency's head of communications, said the age profile of those seeking jobs in schools followed that of the teaching profession as a whole. "It may be that many of these people are in the wrong place or have the wrong qualifications."

Leading article, page 23

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sewage action demand

The Government yesterday told the water industry to clean up sewage while cutting bills by 10 per cent. Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, claimed the combination was achievable but Water UK, the industry's trade association, said there was a £2 billion shortfall between what water companies believed the programme would cost, and figures produced by Ofwat and the Environment Agency. Mr Meacher said that in future all coastal discharges serving populations of 2,000 or more must receive at least secondary treatment.

Car sales 25% down

Figures to be published this week are expected to show a fall of more than 25 per cent in new car registrations in January and February. Car manufacturers, braced for an 8 per cent fall in sales over the year, are hoping for high March sales after yesterday's launch of six-monthly registrations. Although private orders are low for T-reg plates, fleet sales are expected to be good.

Obsessed secretary guilty

Gillian Hartsborne, 50, the secretary of Professor David Canter of Liverpool University, a leading criminal psychologist, was found guilty of harassment causing fear of violence against him. Hartsborne, who became obsessed that he was having an affair with a student and bombarded him with more than 500 abusive telephone calls, will be sentenced on March 15.

McDonald 'improving'

The Channel 4 presenter Sheena McDonald, who suffered serious head injuries when she was hit by a speeding police van, showed signs of a slight improvement. She is still in intensive care at University College Hospital, Central London, but is now able to breathe without a ventilator and her condition remains stable. She was hurt in an accident on Friday night in Islington.

Porn teacher jailed

A public school teacher and former lay clerk at Ely Cathedral who downloaded child pornography from the Internet onto his home computer was jailed for four months. Jonathan Bowden, 30, who taught music at The King's School, Ely, admitted 21 charges at Chelmsford Crown Court, Essex. The offences came to light when Bowden took his computer for repairs.

Scots told to keep nuclear deterrent

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR

A NUCLEAR-FREE independent Scotland would dangerously weaken Britain's nuclear deterrent, the Defence Secretary said yesterday.

George Robertson, who in his youth campaigned against the deployment of American ballistic missile submarines at Holy Loch, told a Scottish audience that the Royal Navy's Trident submarines must remain at Faslane because the base on the Clyde had long played an important part in Britain's defence.

Delivering his first major speech on nuclear policy at Aberdeen University, Mr Robertson warned the Scottish Nationalist Party: "Those who would take Scotland out of the United Kingdom need to address the implications of separation for the rest of the country."

The nationalists, he said, were committed to closing all nuclear installations on Scottish soil and prohibiting all nuclear-powered submarines from Scottish waters.

The clear implication, he said, was that the Faslane base would have to be moved south.

"What would happen to those jobs linked to the nuclear facilities at Faslane? What would be the timescale for withdrawal?" he asked.

Mr Robertson also asked whether the SNP had bothered to think about the years of "fraught" negotiations between Russia and Ukraine to divide the Black Sea Fleet, following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"What of a separate Scottish state compensating the rest of the United Kingdom for any costs that arose?" he asked.

Mr Robertson also called on Scottish nationalists to consider the cost of setting up a separate Scottish Army, Navy and Air Force.

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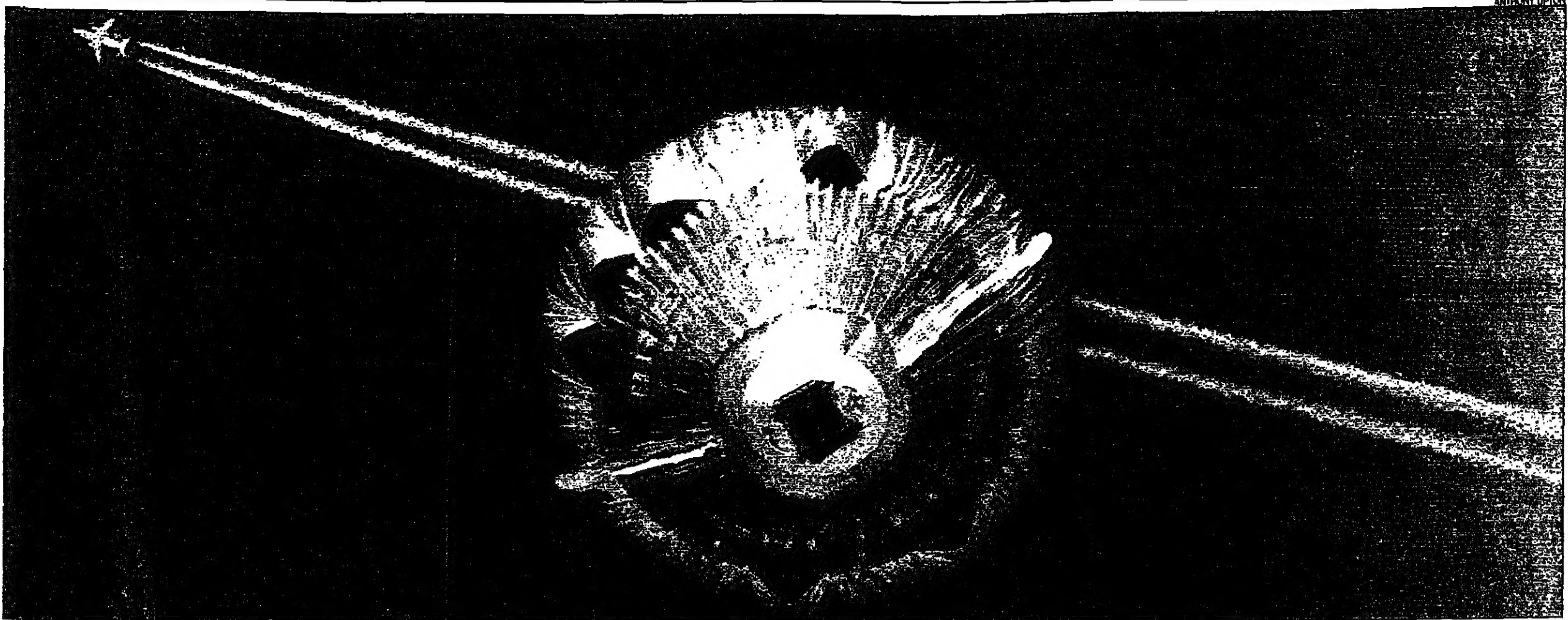
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After several bumpy false starts, the Breitling Orbiter 3 balloon takes to the skies in the Swiss Alps yesterday, starting a race to the finish with the Cable & Wireless craft which is currently attempting to manoeuvre around China

Global balloon race finally takes off

FROM HELEN RUMBLOW IN CHÂTEAU D'OEX

THE challenge to be the first team to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon became a true race yesterday with the launch of Breitling Orbiter 3 in the Swiss Alps.

Andy Elson was hanging outside his Cable & Wireless balloon over the Bay of Bengal yesterday morning when his co-pilot told him that their rivals were airborne.

Although it is 6,000 miles behind, the Breitling Orbiter is smaller, lighter and will go faster - a lean hare to the Cable and Wireless tortoise.

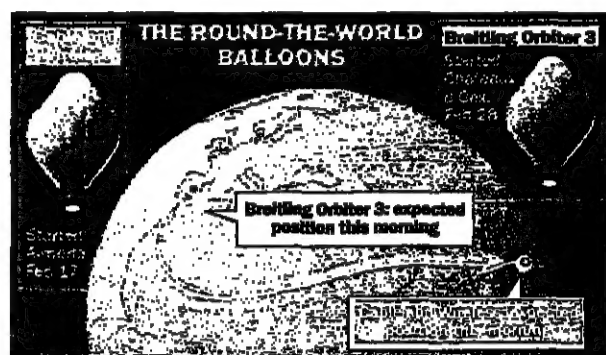
The news only added to Mr Elson's frustration at being forced to take the slow route around China. As they are a British team the Chinese have banned them in retribution for Richard Branson's trespassing balloon flight at Christ-

mas. Although the Cable & Wireless craft has broken the world endurance record of 10 days and will by tomorrow have spent a fortnight in the air, now at 20mph they can only sit and watch their rivals catch them up on the best 100mph winds going over China.

However it was a rocky start for the Breitling Orbiter 3 in Chateau d'Oex and for Brian Jones, the British co-pilot who was standing on top of the capsule as it launched.

The same fast winds that have the team confidently predicting they will be around the world in 15 days caused the 55 metre high silver balloon to strain at its tethers.

It crashed down to earth five times with alarming crunching sounds, rocking Mr Jones



on his feet before it finally shot up into the air at 8.05am.

Mr Jones, 51, a ballooning instructor from Devizes, Wiltshire, had earlier asked the 5,000-strong crowd to sing Happy Birthday to Bertrand Picard, his Swiss co-pilot who was 41 yesterday.

This was forgotten in the anxiety of take-off. "It was a

very difficult dangerous take-off," said Joanna Jones, his wife, a balloon pilot and member of the Breitling mission control team.

"Balloons are not meant to bounce like that and to make it worse this is the first time Brian has been on top of the capsule as it launches.

"It makes it worse to know

how dangerous this can be. I was trying not to watch but it all got a little bit more emotional than advertised."

Within three hours of launching the pilot announced that the balloon had been undamaged by its battering and predicted they would be over Morocco by this morning.

They aim to be on the Pacific coast by this weekend, gaining at least a week on their rivals and possibly overtaking them. "This is tedious low level manoeuvring," said Ian Achpole, flight director for Cable & Wireless. "But it's important to get around China, and still have enough fuel to get all the way around the world."

The Cable & Wireless balloon is predicted to be close to the coast of Burma by this morning. The Breitling headed at 17mph over the Matterhorn and on to Turin and

Nice. By this morning the Breitling team hopes to be travelling over the coast of Morocco and by tomorrow to Mauritania where they aim to pick up a 100mph jet stream, heading for China in around six days.

Just before lift off Mr Jones said that the Breitling team had never felt so confident.

"The idea that we are taking off in a last ditch attempt at the end of the season couldn't be further from the truth," he said. Instead, he said, the winds were faster than they had predicted.

The Cable & Wireless team has given up efforts to repair a faulty heater, which has left Colin Prescott and Mr Elson forced to wear Arctic survival gear at high altitudes.

A spokeswoman said: "It is not ideal, but it is not mission-threatening, so they will just be putting a brave face on it."



Brian Jones kisses his wife Joanna goodbye

Boy, 13, is not guilty over death of brother

A BOY aged 13 who accidentally killed his brother with a knife bore no responsibility for his death, a judge said yesterday.

Mr Justice Poole told Leeds Crown Court that Daniel Cooper was not guilty of a manslaughter charge arising from the death of his brother, Richard, 18, and that he should "put this matter behind him".

The judge's comments came after the prosecution dropped a charge of murder against the boy, then offered no evidence when he pleaded not guilty to an alternative charge of manslaughter.

Aidan Marron, QC, for the prosecution, told the court that Richard Cooper, a builder's labourer, had been stabbed through the eye during an argument at the family home in York last December.

Mr Marron said that after struggling with his father, John, Richard had grabbed Daniel by the face with both hands.

"Daniel grabbed hold of a nearby kitchen knife. He held it by the handle with the blade pointing up. There is no suggestion that it was held in a stabbing fashion," he said.

Mr Marron said that when Richard suddenly moved forward the blade of the knife penetrated his eye and brain. He died in hospital the following day.

Paul Worsley, QC, for the defence, said: "This was a tragic accident, as young Daniel has always said."

Take That star challenges £1m court decision

BY JOANNA BALE

ROBBIE WILLIAMS, the reformed bad boy of pop who won three Brit Awards this year, began another courtroom battle yesterday with the man who launched his show-business career.

Lawyers for the 25-year-old performer are challenging a High Court ruling that he must pay his former manager, Nigel Martin-Smith, £90,000 in commission under the terms of a complex management agreement. At stake is an estimated £1 million when legal costs, VAT, interest and further ongoing commission are assessed.

The case, in the Court of Appeal, dates from 1995 when Mr Williams left Take That, the phenomenally successful five-piece boy band created by Mr Martin-Smith, in the late 1980s. Michael Silverleaf, QC,



Williams: second legal fight with ex-manager

for the singer, told how Mr Williams decided to leave because he found "the tight restrictions" imposed by Mr Martin-Smith to maintain the band's clean-living image "somewhat difficult".

"There is no dispute that Mr Williams, in terms of his ability to perform, was widely perceived to be the funnyman with the ability to get the audience going... he was generally regarded as the frontman."

Alluding to Mr Williams' penchant for alcohol and drugs, from which he has now recovered, Mr Silverleaf added: "Mr Williams began to go out to parties and enjoy himself, which caused friction. He began to talk about leaving because of his desire to get on and work on his own, but he made it quite clear that he was quite happy to fulfil all the commitments of the band."

However, the other members of the band, Gary Barlow, Jason Orange, Mark Owen and Howard Donald, told Mr Williams that Mr Martin-Smith had advised them that he should leave immediately.

Mr Silverleaf argued that Mr Martin-Smith was therefore not entitled to the commission because he had breached the management agreement. "Instead of organising the dissolution of the band amicably, he decided to protect the remaining four."

The hearing continues.

Clowes is jailed for benefits fraud

BY A CORRESPONDENT

PETER CLOWES, the disgraced financier, was jailed for four months yesterday after he was found guilty of making false claims for job seeker's allowance.

Clowes, 56, sentenced to ten years after the collapse of the investment company Barlow Clowes in 1992, had denied claiming £1,800 in benefits when he was working.

Judge John Rogers, QC, sitting at Mold Crown Court in North Wales, told Clowes, from Stockport, Manchester: "You informed both orally and in writing the Benefits Agency that you weren't working. That was untrue."

During the five-day trial, the jury was told that Clowes was accused of three specimen charges over a four-month period from December 1996 to March 1997.

Robin Spencer, for the prosecution, said Clowes had been working for a computer company in London called WP Software. However, he had left that job and begun claiming benefit while living with his wife and two children in a rented, £800-a-month house in Macclesfield, Cheshire.

But the prosecution said he was working as a computer programmer for a business trading under the name of PCSI, set up by his step-daughter and her boyfriend. He had been paying his household bills from the business bank account. Clowes was being "paid through the back door".

Salvatore Ferragamo



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PC pounds beat in search of jury

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A JUDGE faced with a shortage of jurors ordered a police officer to go out into the street to press-gang passers-by. But not one person agreed to help.

Judge Richard Hayward ordered the rare move when an indecent assault trial in his court at Lewes, East Sussex, was delayed for four hours after a female juror failed to attend.

He sent PC Dave Bielkus to find a replacement but the men and women in the street, showing a marked lack of civic duty, all made excuses and left. The problem was resolved only when a juror summoned three hours earlier finally

arrived in a taxi. The incident occurred on Friday but details were not disclosed until the trial finished yesterday to avoid any possible prejudice to proceedings.

A jury of 12 had been sworn in on Thursday and the prosecution had opened its case before Judge Hayward adjourned the proceedings overnight. On Friday morning, no trace could be found of a female juror in her 20s.

Judge Hayward was forced officially to discharge the 11 remaining jurors to allow a fresh group of 12 to be selected and sworn in, but all potential jurors were by then serving in other trials. Court staff tried to contact Hove

Crown Court, ten miles away, to see if it had any spare jurors, only to get an answerphone message. Finally a spare juror did arrive from Hove to bring the pool of available jurors up to 12.

That still left a problem: a jury has to be selected at "random" and for that to happen a pool of at least 13 must be available. Judge Hayward agreed to send court staff outside to "summon someone on the street". Eventually, a 13th juror arrived more than three hours after being contacted at home and told to take a taxi.

Mark Venables, 21, from Hove, East Sussex, was found not guilty of indecent assault.

Alexandra Frean on the Royal Commission's proposals

Elderly may not have to sell up to afford care

ELDERLY people could be spared the anguish of having to sell their home to pay for long-term nursing or residential care. Proposals unveiled yesterday by the Royal Commission on Long-Term Care for the Elderly proposed making all nursing and personal care — including administering medication and help with washing and dressing — free to all those who are assessed as needing it.

Normal living and housing costs would remain the responsibility of care-home residents under the proposals, which would cost the state £1.2 billion to implement in the first year.

The radical proposals also include raising the savings level — including the value of a home — that a person can have before they have to start paying for their own care, from £16,000 to £60,000.

The new system would be overseen by a National Care Commission, headed by a "care czar", which would enforce minimum standards and monitor costs.

A dissenting note, signed by two of the 12 commissioners, rejected the main proposals as

THE FUTURE

too costly and recommended that people should be able to borrow against the value of their house to fund care.

Sir Stewart Sutherland, chairman of the commission, said that the current system of funding long-term care, which divides responsibilities between the State and the individual, was complex and confusing and created real fear among those approaching old age. "This is a scandal in modern Britain and it must be changed," he said.

"If we have a heart attack or cancer, we know that the health service we have paid for through our taxes will deliver the care we require without further payment. But if we are unfortunate enough to become frail and need care through old age, we suddenly find we are expected to meet some or all of the costs ourselves. This is not right," Sir Stewart said.

Other recommendations include: The value of a person's home should be disregarded for up to three months after admission to care in a home, to

ensure that people are able to return to their own home if needed.

The opportunity for rehabilitation should be included as an integral part of any care assessment.

Budgets shared between health, social services and other statutory bodies should be integrated.

Local authorities should be allowed to make loans to individuals who need aids or housing adaptations that will enable them to stay in their own home.

A national carer support package should be introduced and £20 million a year set aside to help carers. This would need to rise to £700 million by 2050.

More emphasis should be given to delaying illness and dependency on long-term care, through health education and more preventive medicine.

Sir Stewart said it was important to "shatter the myth that the nation cannot afford to pay for personal care for its old people". There was, he insisted, no such thing as a "demographic timebomb" and the cost of care was affordable.



Patricia Davey: "My mother's generation thought they had paid their dues and they would be looked after in old age"

"We have taken advice from the most eminent economists and we are confident that we have got our sums right," he said.

The nation currently pays £11.1 billion a year on long-term care for the elderly, including contributions from individuals. This would rise to £45 billion by the middle of the next century. If the proposals were implemented, the State's share of costs would rise from £8.2 billion at the moment to £33 billion by 2050.

Organisations representing the elderly welcomed the report and urged the Government to act on it immediately.

Leading article, page 23

The age-old dilemma

LIKE tens of thousands of others, Patricia Davey is looking for a residential home for an elderly parent.

Her mother, Marjorie, a widow who suffers from dementia, is recovering from a broken leg and the family has decided that they can no longer provide her with the care she needs in her own home.

Although Marjorie, 78, does not fully know it, she will have to sell the small terraced house she has lived in for the past 14 years to pay for her nursing home fees of £316 to

THE MOTHER

£380 a week. This is because her savings — including the value of her house — come to more than £16,000. Once her assets have been reduced to £16,000, the State will be liable for some of the costs, and once they fall to £10,000, the State should pay her fees in full.

Mrs Davey, from Morley in Leeds, is upset at having to sell her mother's home. "It is not a very nice feeling, espe-

cially when you know that people who do not have a home to sell get all their care for free."

She welcomes the commission's recommendation that no pensioner should have to pay their own nursing and personal care costs. "My mother worked in the mills during the war and after that always had a job. Her generation saw the NHS come into existence. They thought they had paid their dues and that they would be looked after in their old age."

'State cannot foot bill for all'

THE DISSENTERS

By JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

A MINORITY report from two members of the Royal Commission rejects the main recommendations as too expensive but suggests that elderly people should be able to take out a government loan to avoid selling their homes.

David Lipsey and Joel Joffe have produced a "dissenting" report which argues that the poorer taxpayer should not be footing the bill for care of those on higher incomes. They suggest an extension of private insurance for nursing and residential care by extending pension tax breaks, while accepting that it cannot entirely replace funding from taxation.

The two commissioners recommend that the Government allocates £300 million to cover the shortfall for nursing and residential homes. They also suggest raising from £16,000 to £30,000 the level of savings allowed before people have to pay for their care, and changing the amount payable if savings drop below £30,000. They call for the end of the anomaly where people in nursing homes pay for their care whilst those in hospitals, residential homes and their own homes do not.

Means-testing is unpopular and seen as unjust

By ALEXANDRA FREAN

THE CHOICE NOW

THE present system of means-testing for care in old age is deeply unpopular and perceived as grossly unjust.

Many people who have carefully saved all their lives and paid off their mortgage regard it as unfair that they should have to use up all their savings and sell their family home in order to pay for their care, while those with no savings get it free from the State.

Under present rules, people who move into a residential or nursing home have to pay all the costs until their income (including state benefits) and savings (including the value of their home, if they live alone) have been reduced to £16,000, at which point the State will pay for part of their care. Once savings fall to £10,000, the State will meet the full costs.

There is also the huge perceived injustice concerning types of illness. An elderly person with cancer and needing

hospital care would get it free on the NHS. Those of the same age with Alzheimer's disease, however, would have to pay for all or part of their care, merely because they would be unlikely to be admitted to hospital and would have to stay in their own home or in a residential establishment.

One way to protect assets is to take out a long-term care insurance policy. Depending on a person's health, gender and age, a monthly premium of between £50 to £70 could be expected to provide up to £10,000 care cover a year.

Elderly people needing care can no longer rely on their immediate family to provide it. In a recent survey only 40 per cent of adults said that if a parent needed care they would try to look after him or her themselves; 55 per cent said they would not expect their own children to look after them.

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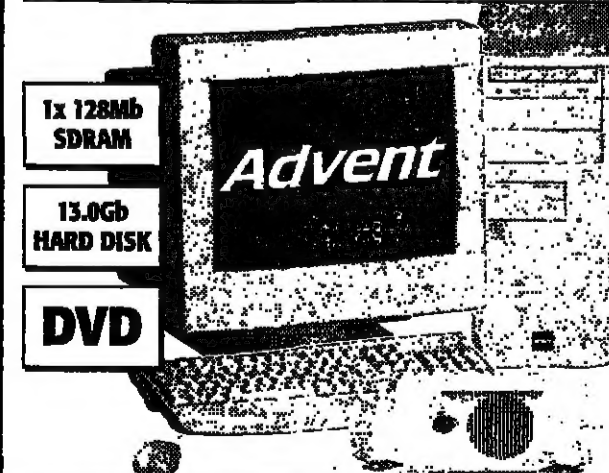
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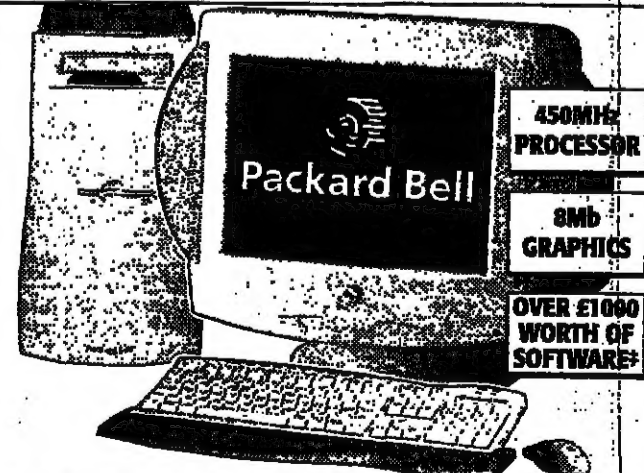
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Oxford college sees drink as bar to success

By Helen Johnstone

AN OXFORD college is considering a cut in bar opening hours in an attempt to improve students' examination results.

Reducing evening opening by an hour is one of a series of measures academics are discussing with undergraduates at St Catherine's. At present the college languishes 28th out of 30 in the Norrington Table, the unofficial league table of Oxford colleges' academic performance.

Students are fiercely critical of the plan, which would restrict opening hours from 9pm to 11pm instead of 7.30pm to 11.30pm. More than 250 protesters packed into a routine junior common room meeting normally attended by only 50.

An unofficial poster on the college's JCR notice board invited academics to set a better example by cutting their own consumption of wine at college dinners. The poster suggested it would ensure dons were on top form "to lead their sinful students back to academic paradise" rather than branding them "feckless delinquents bloated on Castlemaine".

Balveen Ajmal, the JCR president at St Catherine's, said yesterday that students generally thought the idea of reducing bar hours was a bad

one. She said: "It would encourage people to go out into town, which takes more time. It might encourage people to drink more in a short period of time and there is a benefit of having people in college when they are going to drink rather than send them into town."

Ms Ajmal emphasised that a number of measures were being considered to raise academic standards at the college following meetings between the JCR and fellows. "The relationship between the two has been good, with quite a bit of give and take. I hope the idea about the bar will not be seen as a punitive measure, rather as one of many constructive suggestions being considered."

The governing body is having a big rethink about how the college is performing. There will be no quick changes.

An academic policy committee, set up at St Catherine's to increase standards, is expected to make a number of recommendations to the university's governing body.

Students say study and alcohol do mix

STUDENTS at Balliol College, Oxford, believe that their results reflect any link between bar opening hours and poor academic performance (Helen Johnstone writes).

Balliol, whose students enjoy the longest bar opening hours of any Oxford college, shot up to fifth place from 19th in this year's Norrington Table. Neville Eisenberg, the college's junior common room president, said: "It is absolutely ridiculous to suggest that closing the bar would improve academic results."

He attributed Balliol's success to its strong academic record. "Ours is one of only two bars at the university run by students and we open from 6.30pm to 11pm," he said. "If people want to drink, they will go into town to drink, and that would result in more problems."

Harris Manchester College, bottom of the Norrington Table, yesterday denied that alcohol consumption had anything to do with its position. Caroline Barnes, 26, a JCR spokeswoman, said: "Our college is low in the table only because it is small. We are all

mature students and there are only about 120 of us.

"Our bar is like a small living-room. Few of us ever over-indulge. There are not many students who are under 30 and we are quite happy to have a couple of glasses of wine after dinner."

Tony George, bar manager at St Catherine's College, said that he rarely saw more than 50 students on a weeknight, and that many of them wanted only a can of cola. "They don't drink massive amounts. If you reduced the opening hours they would just go into town and drink there," he said.

Balveen Ajmal, St Catherine's JCR president, said: "We are more laid-back here than at other colleges where there is much more of a bar culture. We have a pool table and television and they attract as many people as the alcohol."

She conceded, however, that last year's favourite tipple was a "bit dubious". "It was called Cuban Fire and I think it was a type of rum punch. Fortunately, most students have gone back to drinking beer," she said.

the discussions was not to improve St Catherine's position in the Norrington Table but to make sure students got the academic support they needed.

Martin Jackson, bursar of St Catherine's, yesterday confirmed that a working party of fellows had been looking at academic standards and had examined bar opening hours among a wide range of domestic activities affecting academic life.

He said he had not seen their report and was not aware of proposals to cut bar opening hours.

Any changes would be done in consultation with the junior common room. He added: "The report has not yet been seen by the governing body of the college. Until that takes place nothing in the report is either a proposal or an item for action."



Pet rescue: a fireman reaching for the trapped Armani



Back behind bars: the hamster after its two-day jaunt

Firemen dig deep to save hamster

A PET hamster that disappeared down a drainpipe at its owner's home in Aspley Guise, Bedfordshire, at the weekend was eventually rescued by firemen from 6ft under the garden patio yesterday.

One fire engine and a rescue unit with 12 firefighters on board attended after Armani could be heard by her owners scratching underground. The firefighters had to dig a deep hole to expose the pipe and free the animal, and that meant ripping up the patio.

Armani, a female hamster, was eventually freed by a fireman who had been lowered head first into the 6ft hole by his colleagues. The firefighters had earlier sent a remote-

controlled camera down the pipe and were able to see where Armani was stuck.

The trouble began on Saturday when the hamster escaped after being let out of its cage during a power cut. Karen Wakefield, 32, her husband Tim, 37, and their sons Tom, 7, and George, 5, searched by candlelight for Armani. But when the lights came back on, there was no sign of the pet hamster.

The search continued on Sunday and yesterday morning Mrs Wakefield heard the sounds of scratching from a pipe that ran from under the kitchen sink to the garden outside. The family called in the fire brigade.

Catholic school bans Red Nose Day

By Adam Sherwin

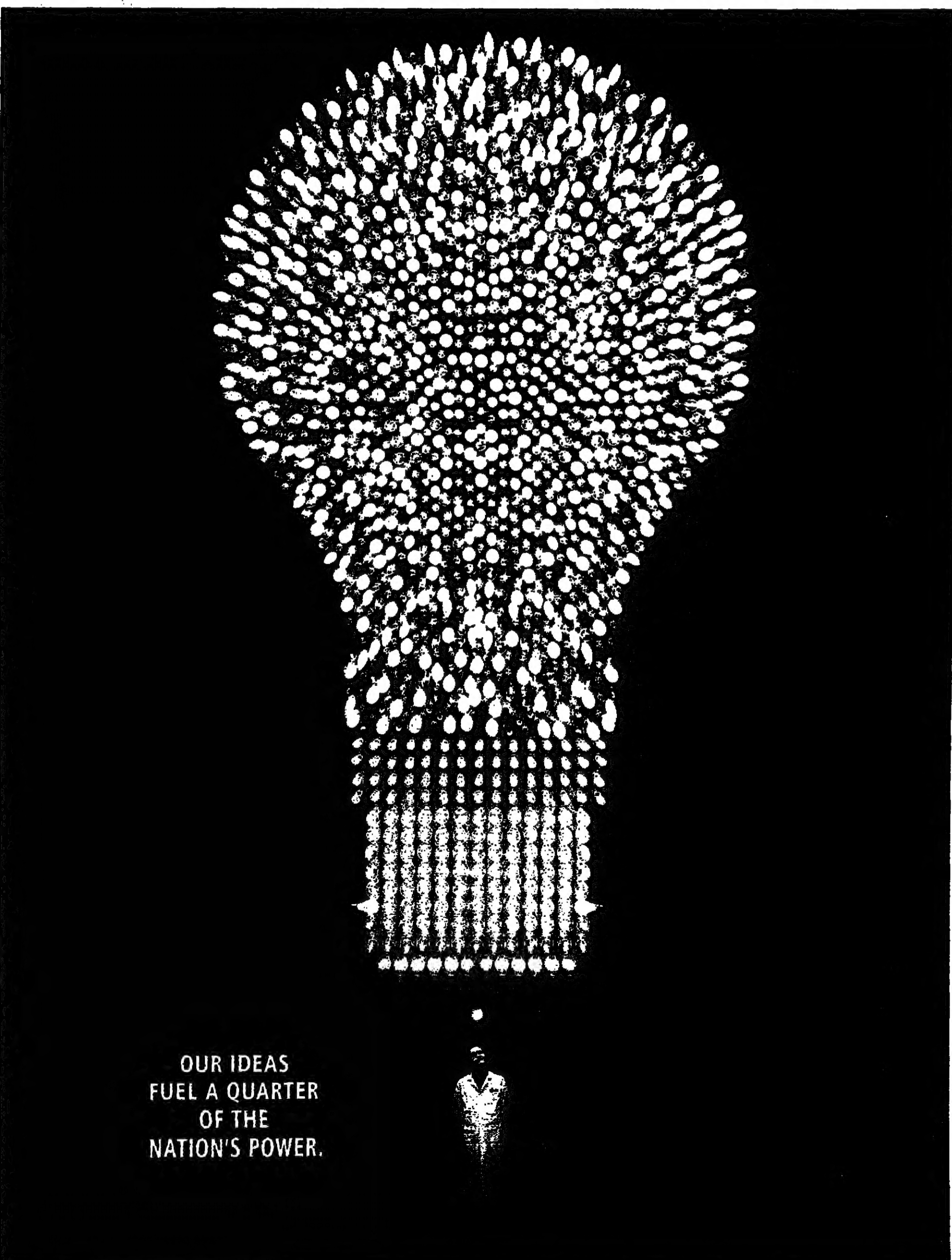
A HEADMASTER has banned pupils from taking part in Red Nose Day because funds raised by the charity Comic Relief support projects that promote contraception.

Children at Rosary Roman Catholic School in Salford, Birmingham, will not be allowed to wear red noses or collect money at school for the appeal on March 12.

Jim Caffery, the head, said: "We are against Red Nose Day because of its support for contraception, abortion and sterilisation, which I believe is a moral evil."

Mr Caffery's stand was supported by the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic Media Office said: "People will question whether family planning is a need in the same way as acute poverty."

Comic Relief said that misleading information had been circulated about its activities. "We do not fund abortions or sterilisation. We fund work that promotes informed choice about family planning," a spokesman said.



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Where science never sleeps

Village wins compromise on grant

By Simon de Bruijckere

A VILLAGE that spurned the offer of £180,000 from the National Lottery for a new leisure centre was yesterday celebrating a far smaller grant to improve its existing hall.

The 352 residents of Llanbedr, near Crickhowell in Powys, said last year that they were "too middle class" to accept the initial offer from the lottery's Millennium Fund, and that poor former mining communities in the valleys of South Wales would be worthy recipients.

The issue split the village, with those who wanted a new leisure centre accusing their neighbours of snobbery, but in a mini-referendum last year residents voted 135 to 76 to keep their old hall.

Yesterday the National Lottery Charities Board, a separate body responsible for allocating lottery money, agreed to spend £87,000 on the 70-year-old brick hall, at which generations have held harvest festivals and fairs.

Duke cuts rents by 15 per cent

By Claudia Joseph

THE Duke of Northumberland has agreed to cut his tenant farmers' rent by 15 per cent. The duke, 41, who is one of Britain's wealthiest men, has offered the 170 tenants, who pay between £55 and £65 an acre, the choice of a rent decrease or improvements on their farms.

He told them: "The last 18 months have been the worst in living memory. Poor weather and low yields, on top of a high pound, low prices and BSE, have produced a rotten cocktail."

The duke's family seat is Alnwick Castle, set in 100,000 acres, as well as Syon House in London and a shooting lodge in Berwickshire. The tenants' farms range from 200 to 1,000 acres and Northumberland Estates has a turnover of £100 million.

EU talks on farm spending were postponed until Thursday after France protested that some proposed reforms were too radical.

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'State cannot foot bill for all'

THE DISSENTERS

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When the disadvantaged become the disappeared

Every year thousands of children fall through the net.

In the local areas, where these children are concentrated, more than 25% of them will begin life as underweight babies, they have a 30% higher mortality rate and they are twice as likely to die in childhood accidents.

These same children are disadvantaged in education. They can become disruptive in class. Unable to cope, schools exclude them in their thousands-150,000 exclusions in a single year. The majority are children from poorer homes.

Without a decent start in life, many young people never catch up.

Truancy in these deprived districts is currently running at four times the national average.

While one in four pupils at secondary schools near rundown housing estates, leave at sixteen without a single GCSE, five times the national average.

The vast majority of underage pregnancies can be traced back to the same areas.

4,700 girls of school age fell pregnant in 1998 - more than any other country in Europe.

Uneducated, unhappy young people will buck the system when they feel abandoned by it.

Many turn to crime. And pay the price.

Britain locked up 11,000 teenagers in 1998. That's a 40% increase in just five years - a depressing European record.

A staggering 43,000 children run away each year.

Life on the streets can be desperate and dangerous, with the real risk of being caught up with drugs and prostitution, simply to survive.



Beating the odds

Many of the problems children face are complex and interlinked.

The way we see it, they demand an holistic approach.

There is no quick fix. But there is progress to be proud of. Last year The Children's Society helped nearly 40,000 children, directly.

We are the only national charity working with youngsters on remand in prison.

We were the first to open a refuge for those at risk on the streets, the first to develop programmes in primary schools to proactively prevent exclusions and the first to introduce family centres.

Whilst our resources are modest, the impact we make on children's lives is not.

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The Children's Society is their advocate, advisor, friend.

"When Mum left we stayed with Dad. He couldn't get work so they took our home. Social Services put us in one of them bed and breakfast places. Dad and my brother were upstairs, I was on another floor. It was horrible. The guy in the next room started touching me. One night he tried to rape me. They were going to put me and my brother in care. It was the people at The Children's Society that stopped it. They talked to me lots about what happened. And they helped us get a flat. Life savers, that's what Dad calls them."

Karen aged 14

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'State cannot foot bill for all'

DISSENTERS

A GIRL, aged ten whose intelligent mind is trapped inside a gravely disabled body was awarded £2.5 million yesterday.

Twin gets £2.5m for error that blighted her life

A GIRL, aged ten whose intelligent mind is trapped inside a gravely disabled body was awarded £2.5 million yesterday.

The High Court was told that Katie Whitley's disabilities were caused in the half hour between her twin sister's birth and her own. Mr Justice Butefield said that although the case was a tragic one, the Whitleys were a "delightful family" who had "lit up the sometimes gloomy surroundings" of London's Law Courts.

A slip-up at birth tragically diverted the paths of two sisters, reports Ian Murray

family behind her. Katie suffers from dystonic paraplegia, which means that she cannot stand or walk unaided, can scarcely speak and has uncontrollable spasms, although her intelligence is not affected.

Katie was taken into court in her wheelchair yesterday by her parents, Denis, 44, a computer consultant, and Vivienne, 42. Emily and her eldest sister, Clea, 13, sat near her.

Through her father, Katie, of Newcastle in Co. Down, Northern Ireland, had sued the West Kent Health Authority, the managers of Maidstone Hospital.

The health authority, the court was told, admitted 95 per cent liability for Katie's injuries in October 1997 and had agreed to settle her claim for £2.5 million.

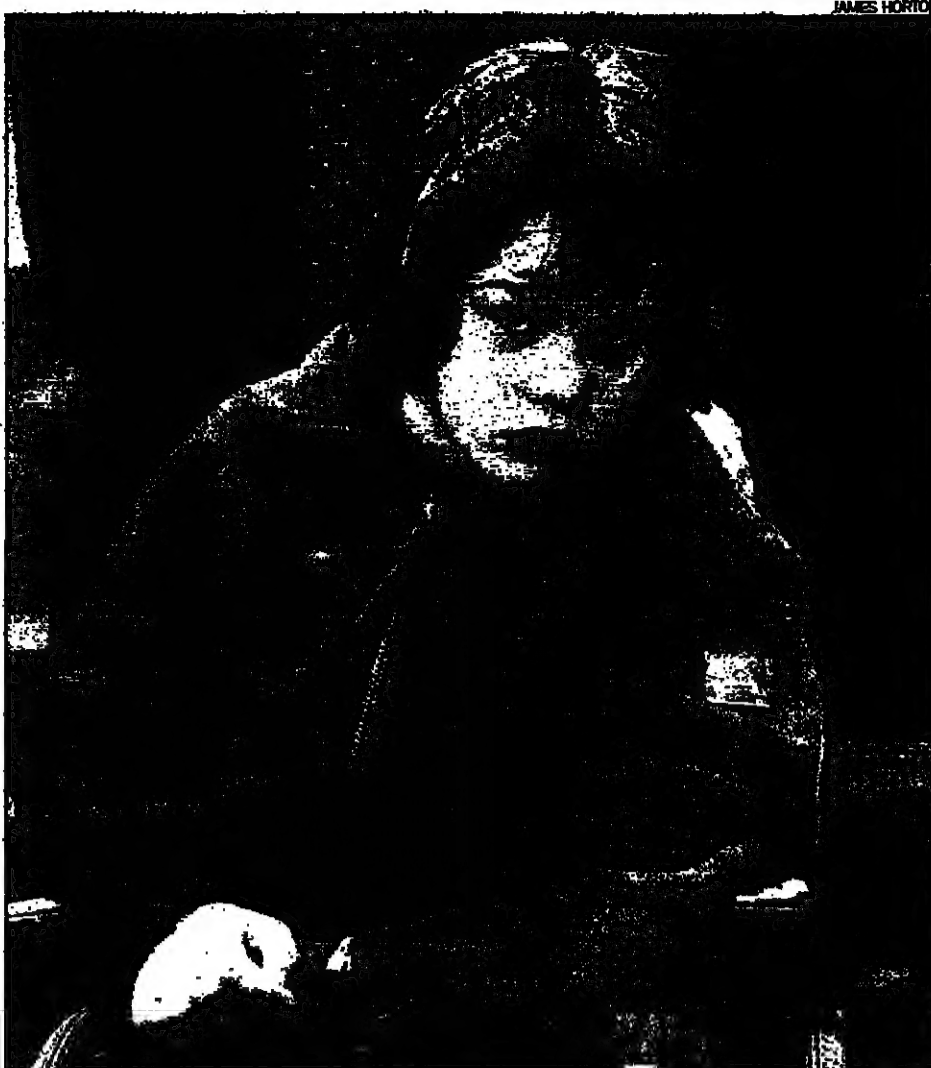
Philip Havers, QC, for the authority, also paid tribute to the "remarkable devotion" of Katie's family. "We on this side wish them well," he said. Liability had been "admitted to a very, very substantial extent", he said and his clients

wished to express their "deep regrets for the events which gave rise to this claim". Although no amount of money could turn back the clock, Mr Havers said, the settlement figure was "large on any view" and the health authority hoped that it would ensure a happy and fulfilled life for Katie.

"This is another example of the triumph of hope over adversity," he said, wishing the family "every fortune".

After the hearing, Mr Whitley said that he was pleased that the case had been settled without the need for a contested trial.

"We are obviously delighted to get the whole thing settled in a way which makes sure Katie will be properly cared for for the rest of her life, without ceaseless battles over her education and care," he said. "She will have her own resources."



Katie Whitley yesterday: she nearly died at birth after her brain was starved of oxygen

Game warden 'hid evidence of murder'

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN NAIROBI

THE former Kenyan game warden accused of murdering Julie Ward hid and suppressed evidence to deflect suspicion of his involvement, the Nairobi High Court was told yesterday.

Simon Ole Makallah's conduct after the disappearance of the British tourist "can only cast a deep suspicion of his motives", Salim Dhanji, the prosecutor, said in his opening address.

Mr Makallah is accused of murdering Miss Ward, 28, at the Masai Mara game reserve in September 1988. He was the first to reach the site where Miss Ward's remains were found.

An initial Kenyan police investigation concluded that Miss Ward had committed suicide by setting herself alight and that her body had then been torn apart by animals. A police post-mortem report was later found to have been altered to remove references to the body having been cut up. Miss Ward's father, John, who

was in court yesterday, has devoted the past decade to discovering the truth about his daughter's death.

As a result of his efforts, and the involvement of detectives from Scotland Yard, two game wardens were tried for Miss Ward's murder in 1992, but acquitted. Mr Makallah was a key prosecution witness at that trial.

The case continues.



Julie Ward: killed on Kenyan game reserve

ing is and just

CHOICE NOW



The bust of Edward Salter, bought by the Ashmolean

Sculpture saved by art charity

BY DALIA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

AN IMPORTANT 18th-century sculpture was saved for the nation yesterday when it was acquired by the Ashmolean Museum for £326,000.

Without the intervention of the art charity, the National Art Collections Fund (NACF), the sculpture would have gone abroad. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts is believed to have been among collectors clamouring to buy it if the Oxford museum had been unable to raise the money.

The marble image of a six-year-old boy is by Michael Rysbrack (1694-1770), the Antwerp-born master who established himself in the 1720s as the most eminent sculptor working in England. He remains an artist revered for his technical virtuosity.

The sculpture of the boy - particularly rare in that it was not created posthumously - represents Edward Salter, who went on to become Chaplain to Henry, Duke of Gloucester.

Its purchase would not have been possible without the NACF, which is becoming increasingly frustrated that it

is almost singlehandedly saving the nation's treasures. The fund is at the forefront of critics of the Heritage Lottery Fund over its decision to abandon works of art in favour of other causes because its own funding has been slashed.

When the lottery fund rejected the Ashmolean's application for £120,000, the NACF was forced to increase its offer from £90,000 to £170,000.

Sir Nicholas Goodison, chairman of the NACF, which has been saving works for public collections since 1903, said: "This is the fifth time that we have increased our grant to secure an outstanding work of art which the Heritage Lottery Fund has not been able to support."

"If action isn't taken soon, future generations will wonder why on earth the opportunities were lost and why there was so little public and political outcry at the time."

Heritage groups are opposing plans by the Ashmolean to drape large advertising banners outside the museum. They are concerned about the impact on the architecture.

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Owen embraces Eurosceptics

Pro-Europe but anti-euro group says it would share platform with hardline sceptics, writes James Landale

LORD OWEN, head of the new pro-European but anti-single currency lobby group, admitted at its launch yesterday that he was prepared to share a platform with Tory Eurosceptics.

New Europe is designed to provide a voice for pro-Europeans opposed to the euro who do not want to link themselves with right-of-centre Eurosceptics. Lord Owen, the former Labour Foreign Secretary who led the breakaway Social Democratic Party, insisted the group was deliberately distinguishing itself from existing Eurosceptics. "We are quite unashamedly and unwaveringly supporters of the European Union," he said.

But he did not rule out sharing the platform with anti-EU Tory MPs such as Bill Cash during a referendum campaign. "If I'm opposed to the single currency at that stage, I would be ready to join with others to campaign," he said.

New Europe, in its statement of principles, also admits that it intends to "work closely" with Business for Sterling,

an anti-euro grouping of industry and City interests.

The launch came as the Government began to put into practice plans announced last week to prepare Britain for potential membership. Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, told a pro-Europe business conference that he wanted the Government's enterprise fund to be paid in euros. Businesses will also be able to pay patent fees in euros and submit accounts in euros.

The advisory council of New Europe comprises 14 political figures, businessmen, economists and journalists who believe that Britain's membership should not be seen as inevitable. They said: "We do not say never but we cannot foresee, at present, a change in circumstances that would persuade us of the case for joining. We believe that there are significant economic dangers for Britain in joining the euro that would seriously compromise our competitiveness. We are convinced that Britain will continue to flourish within the EU but outside euroland."

Lord Owen said: "There is a different way for Europe, which is more decentralised, more diverse, which is compatible with the treaties. We think that is a natural place for Britain. The advisory council also includes Lord Healey, the former deputy Labour leader, who said: "You don't have to be xenophobic, nationalistic or right-wing to worry about the single currency."

Lord Prior, the former Tory Cabinet minister, said: "I would not have broken with my Europhile friends if I did not believe that staying out of the euro is a matter of supreme importance."

Mary Ann Sieghart, Assistant Editor of *The Times*, who is also on the council, said she had never wanted to join the Eurosceptic "club". But once she discovered other pro-Europeans with "doubts about a single currency", she thought it right to "break cover". Other members of the advisory council include Roger Bootle, managing director of Capital Economics; Ruth Lea, head of the policy unit at the Institute of



Single-minded about the single currency: Lord Prior, Mary Ann Sieghart and Lord Owen at the launch of New Europe

Directors: Sir Ewen Ferguson, former Ambassador to Paris; Martin Taylor, former chief executive of Barclays Bank; Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover, former chairman of J Sainsbury; and Janet

Bush, New Europe director and until recently Economics Correspondent of *The Times*.

The new group was greeted sceptically by pro-Europeans. One said: "They are just trying to dress up the anti-euro camp

and make them more respectable." Colin Sharman, chairman of KPMG International, said: "Being in the EU but not being in the euro is roughly the equivalent of being half-pregnant. The proposition real-

ly is half-baked and business will not wear it."

New Europe website: www.new-europe.co.uk. E-mail: info@new-europe.co.uk

Business, page 31

MPs in attack on ministers' arrogance

MPs are expected to demand more independence for select committees after growing complaints about ministerial arrogance (Philip Webster writes).

Ministers are also being warned against trying to intimidate backbenchers in an attempt to get an easy ride from the committees. The chairman of all 27 select committees are being urged to put forward their ideas for reform to the Liaison Select Committee. There was particular anger recently over the Foreign Affairs Select Committee report on arms to Africa which was rubbished by Downing Street before it was published.

Conservative as well as Labour chairmen are calling for the whips to lose control of appointing members of the committees, which is seen as the key way of the executive retaining control.

Lords need more power, not less

The Wakeham commission on the future of the House of Lords that met for the first time yesterday has a choice. It can either deliver the minimalist package which the Government wants, or it can think boldly.

The Government, and most Labour MPs, would like something not very different from the present House but without hereditary peers. It would remain a revising chamber, and might have a special role in relation to devolved assemblies, Europe and the Human Rights Act. But that would be to miss a big opportunity.

The central issue is powers. The Government's White Paper addresses the paradox that the Lords possesses theoretical powers almost as great as the Commons (apart from financial Bills) but observes self-denying ordinances. The White Paper suggests that the current understandings about self-restraint might be institutionalised, leaving the powers intact but restricting the circumstances when they might be used, or the theoretically available powers might be reduced, though they might be used more often.

This passage was frequently quoted in the two-day, 90-plus speaker debate in the Lords last week. This was the usual mixture of the interesting, the reflective, the confused, the complacent and the downright daft. Lord Belhaven and Stenton, whose title dates to 1647, offered the thought that "democracy is new and comparatively untried. We do not know what will come of it over the decades and centuries to come". Lord Norrie, with a mere 42-year-old title, argued that hereditary peers sat by right

of custom, a principle of English property law.

On a more serious level, Lords Cranborne and Richard, the last two Leaders of the Lords, focused on powers. As Lord Cranborne argued: "Paradoxically, a more authoritative Lords would help the Commons to perform better by forcing it to legislate better and to hold the Government to account more rigorously."

Lord Richard, in the best contribution from the Labour side, noted that the lack of legitimacy means that the Lords cannot perform as effectively as it should. So "in this country we have virtually a unicameral system". On his view, "the aim of reform should be to strengthen the second chamber to the point where it has the legitimacy vis-à-vis the Government of the day to carry out its functions properly but not to threaten the position of the Commons". There should continue to be independent members and no one party should be able to command a majority. But such a second chamber would be bound to become more troublesome to the Commons.

There is also a strong case, as Lord Lamont of Lerwick argued, for the Lords to be given the role of "constitutional long stop" — with the right to insist, by a qualified majority of perhaps two thirds, that constitutional Bills should be considered by a referendum. As Lord Lamont concluded: "If this House is to be liberated from its inhibitions, it should not be afraid to demand more powers." The Wakeham commission now has the chance to make a reformed second chamber a central part of a new constitutional settlement rather than just produce a political fix.

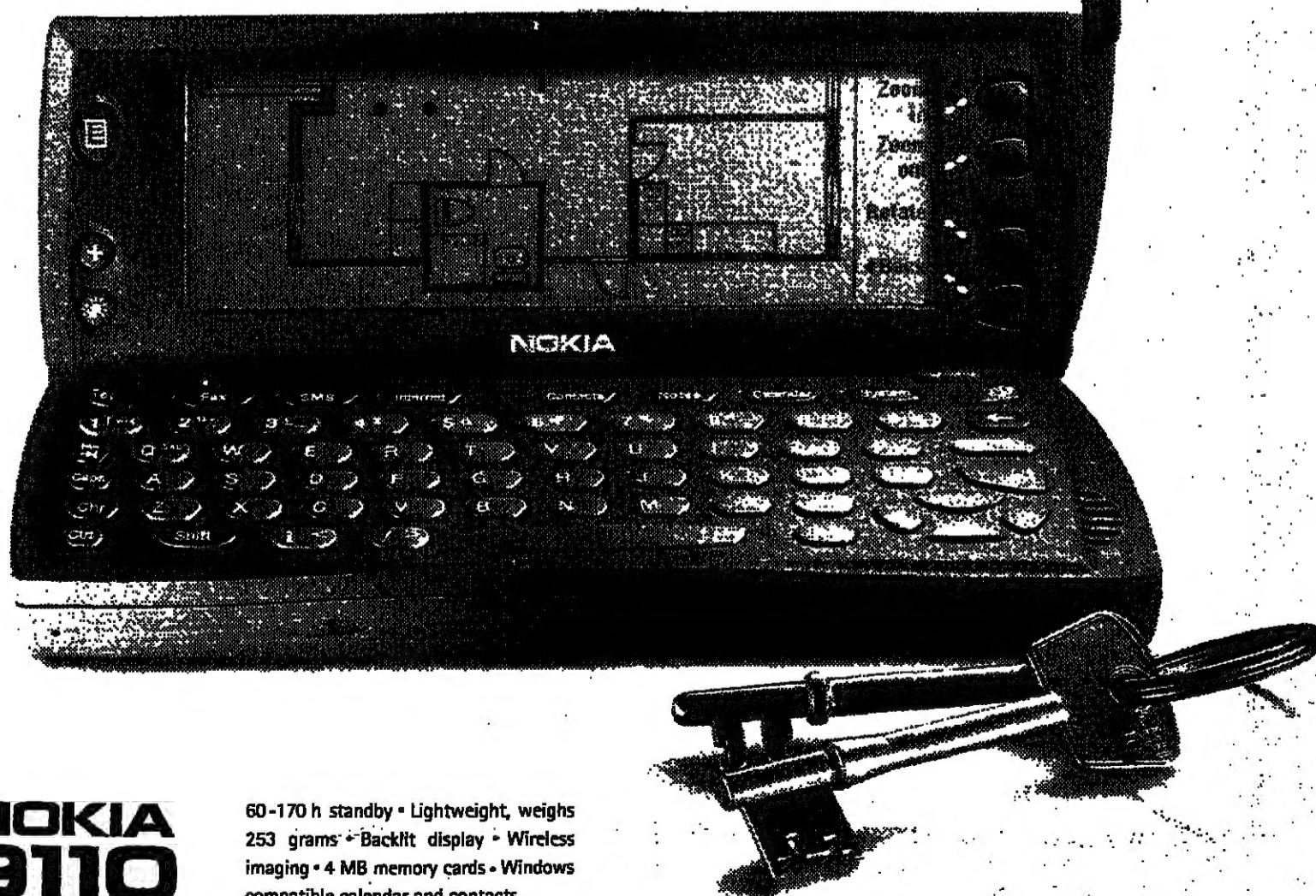
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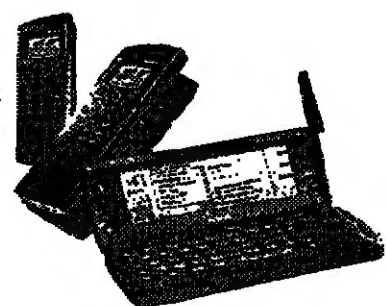
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Government study criticises lack of action on relations with ethnic minorities, Stewart Tendler reports

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Positive replies to 27 questions about policing ethnic and gay communities	
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The Association of Chief Police Officers is praised for its



Small target at a big risk of attack Met wins praise for its progress

By TIM JONES

BY STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

the way we use our powers." Out of a population of 490,145 in Cumbria, there are only 492 black people, 492 Asian people and 984 people of other ethnic minority origins. They mostly have homes

Dr. Johnson, director of the Mary Seacole unit which conducts research on racism and is named after a black heroine who was a nurse during the Crimean War, said: "Some racists are not prepared to contribute to their communities and find it easier instead to hurl abuse at people from the ethnic community who are prepared to work hard."

drawn up by *Winning the Race: Policing Plural Communities Revisited*, produced by the Inspectorate of Constabulary. The study charts progress in race relations since a report published in October 1997. A team led by Dame Crompton, a former Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire, visited a sample of 14 forces.

Mr Crompton also criticises Cumbria and North Yorkshire, both forces with relatively small ethnic-minority communities, for their failure to adopt new policies.

NEWS IN BRIEF

GP denies five more murders

Dr Shipman has already denied killing four other patients on his panel at his surgery in Hyde, Greater Manchester, and forging the will of one of them. He has been committed for trial at Crown Court on those charges. The rest of the charges will be considered at a committal hearing next week. All the cases relate to middle-aged or elderly women from the Hyde area. His trial is due to start on October 4.

Pool death fine

Michael Westmore, the owner of the Pentire Hotel in Newquay, Cornwall, has been fined £8,000 after a six-year-old holidaymaker died in the hotel pool in 1997. Bodmin magistrates were told that the water was too cloudy for the boy to be seen drowning.

Eton funeral

Eton schoolboys and family friends packed into Christ Church, Esher, Surrey, for the funeral of Nicholas Taylor, found hanged in his room at the college. The order of service for the 15-year-old cricket fan was entitled "Batting Order for Our Darling Nick".

Letter bomb

Letter bomb
A woman aged 18 and her baby were taken to hospital suffering from shock after a letter bomb exploded at their home in Pitsea, Essex, shattering windows. Bomb disposal experts searched the area. Two male occupants were not injured in the incident.

Snail handicap


A rare snail, the 2mm *Vertigo augustior*, threatens to thwart plans for a multimillion-pound golf complex designed by Greg Norman at Doonbeg, Co. Clare. Environmentalists have launched three appeals against the decision to approve the development.

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of customer support. But perhaps the best part of the show is the music. Louis Armstrong and the band, known as the Louis Armstrong All-Stars, played a number of tunes in Armstrong's signature style. The band's music is a blend of jazz and blues, and it's a testament to Armstrong's talent as a musician and a leader.

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We still need Smiley's people says Le Carré

The Cold War is over but the spy writer believes the Secret Service has a vital role, reports Michael Evans

SPY should not come in from the cold, despite East-West détente, the spy writer John le Carré said. The former MI6 intelligence officer declared in a rare lecture that spies are needed more than ever.

Le Carré, who flourished as an author during the Cold War era of espionage and intrigue, said that when the world's power blocs were split between East and West, spying was an easier business. Now, with the former Soviet Union fragmented, Britain's spies had a tough challenge to keep pace with the proliferation of problems in many of the world's smaller countries.

There is plenty of scope for intelligence work, he said during a lecture at the Liverpool Unity Theatre. "In the future, I

think the great burden of intelligence work will be counter-terrorist, from wherever the terrorist threat comes. It will also be concerned with international crime on a grand scale."

The author, whose latest novel, *Single & Single*, has just been published, worked for both MI5 and MI6.

Last month he ended a long-standing mystery when he revealed that George Smiley, his most famous fictional hero, celebrated in such books as *Smiley's People*, was not modelled on the former MI6 chief Sir Maurice Oldfield, as had been supposed. He said that the character had been partly based on the late John Bingham, the 7th Baron Clanmorris. Bingham, who served with MI6, was known in the intelligence community as "Lord Clandestine".

In the literary lecture, Le Carré said: "The secret services simply have to remain responsive and responsible and very much under the control of parliamentary democracy. I don't think there is a case for saying they should not exist any more."

"We expect them to find out who is going to blow us up next and if they don't do it, we say they are inefficient, but we don't say that we should abolish them."

MI6, like other sections of the security and intelligence world, has suffered cuts since

the end of the Cold War and now has an annual budget of about £150 million and a staff of fewer than 2,000.

Le Carré, whose real name is David Cornwell, poured scorn on Western governments that had allowed the Cold War to continue for so long. He said: "We failed to embrace the former Soviet empire. We failed to give them their dignity."

"Instead, there was a shameful expectation on our side, particularly the American side, that if we gave them enough pairs of jeans and enough rock music and had McDonald's there, somehow they would find private enterprise for themselves."

"They didn't do that. They found crime."



Le Carré said spies must fight terrorism and crime

Plankton could help to reverse global warming

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

FERTILISING the sea with iron filings dramatically accelerates the growth of plant plankton, which absorb large amounts of greenhouse gases, an experiment in the Southern Ocean has shown.

Researchers who had spent the month spreading filings over 19 square miles of Antarctic waters 2,500 miles south-west of New Zealand returned to Wellington yesterday enthusiastic about the results.

Rob Murdoch, of the New Zealand National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, said: "Not only did the numbers of phytoplankton bloom extensively but they were responsible for absorption of a significantly greater amount of carbon dioxide during the study period compared with the seas outside the area," he said. "The plankton in the growing patch also produced significant quantities of gases known to be important in cloud formation."

The aim of the research was to see whether the filings would replenish stocks of plankton, which form the foundation of the ocean food chain, and to discover whether the microscopic plants captured excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and contributed to cloud build-up.

The late John Martin, an American oceanographer, theorised in 1995 that phytoplankton needed iron in order to take nitrogen and phosphate from seawater, just as farm crops need trace minerals such as zinc and manganese.

Subsequent experiments showed that half a ton of iron filings triggered 30-fold to 40-fold increases in plankton stocks over areas of up to 193 square miles. This resulted in up to 9,000 tons of carbon dioxide being "locked up", and a three-fold increase in dimethyl sulphide particles, which have a key role in cloud formation.

Scientists believe that if the fertilisation could be done on a large enough scale in the Southern Ocean it could reduce the concentration of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere by between 6 per cent and 21 per cent, significantly cooling the planet.



Anna Molinari is feted on the catwalk after her Blumarine show in Milan yesterday

Milan shows no fear when it comes to fur

FROM DEBORAH BRETT IN MILAN

ITALIAN fashion has never succumbed to anti-fur pressure and the women of Milan refuse to venture out in winter without their fur coats.

Anna Molinari's diffusion label, Blumarine, continued the love affair with a show yesterday that had mink trimmings on scoop-neck jumpers, coat collars, jumper cuffs, even inside parka hoods. The soft-sell came in every colour — from candy floss pink and sky blue to icicle white.

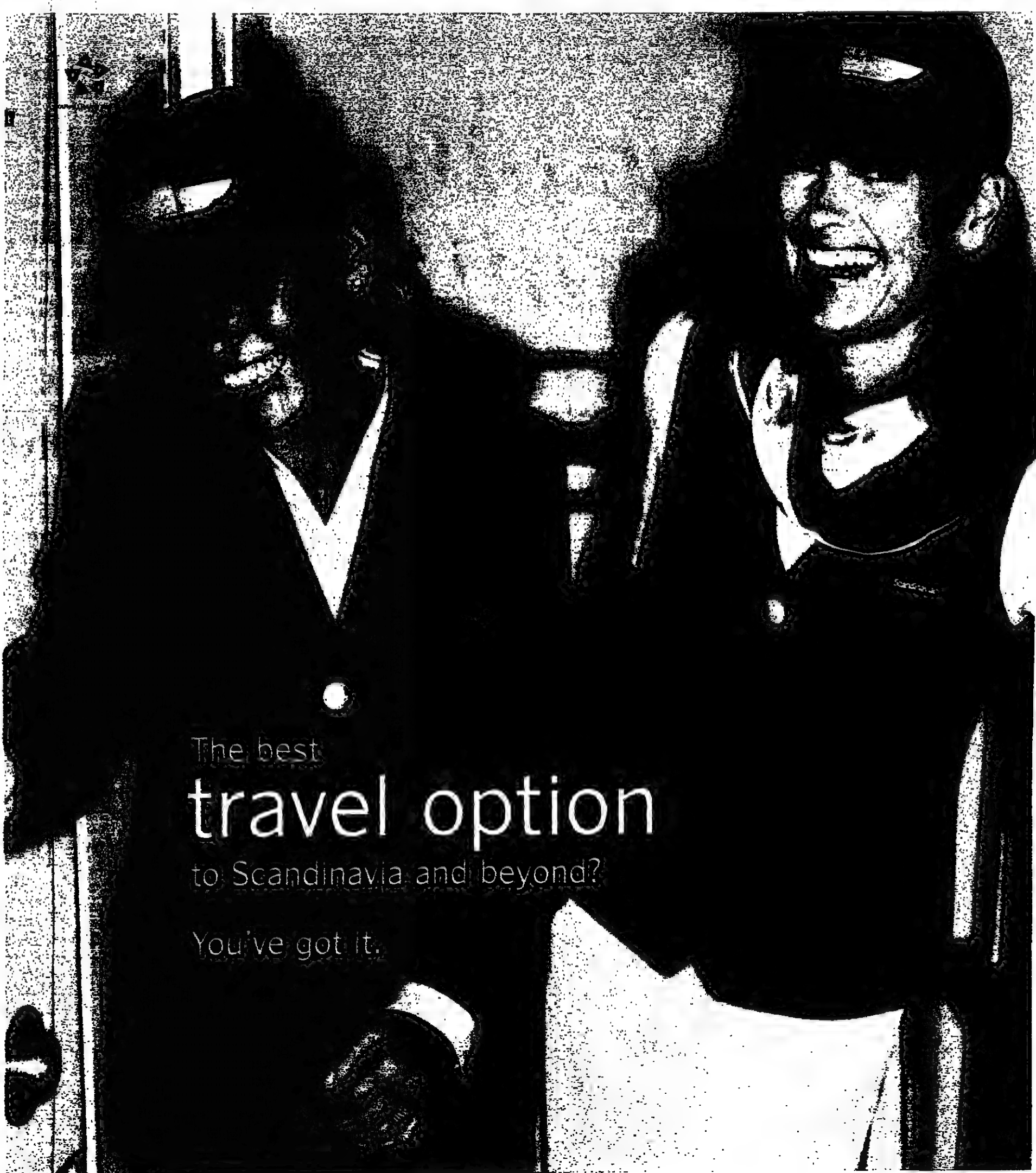
Blumarine girls still haven't grown up and yesterday looked as if they had been trawling through their mother's dressing room — in bright-red lips and green eye-shadow thickly applied. The year of influence was impossible to pin down: Molinari had decided to pick and choose from Twenties flapper girl, Fifties prom queen and Seventies rock chick.

Giorgio Armani was also in age-defying mood yesterday: at the age of 64, he has made his younger line even younger. There was not a suit in sight, let alone his trademark beige, at the Emporio Armani show. Instead, next winter, fans of Mr Minimalist will be in a pared-down version of urban chic.

The theme may have been colour, with an abundance of aqua, turquoise, sea green and red, but this was only for accessories: the core clothes were in every shade of grey.

With the emphasis on sportswear, there were detachable hoods, Velcro-fastening trousers, and leather jackets with elongated arm zips. Accessories for the urban warrior included shoes made from thick elastic strips and pouch bags.

Armani's signature detailing came only towards the end of the show, with beading — normally seen edging scarves and jacket lapels — sewn in strips to the top edge of nude bodystockings.



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US appeals for calm after raids on Israel border

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE United States yesterday sent urgent diplomatic messages to Israel, Syria and Lebanon, urging restraint in the new crisis along Israel's northern border in an attempt to prevent tension in the region escalating.

The messages were sanctioned by Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, and reflected the gravity with which Washington views the situation after the killing on Sunday of an Israeli general, a subsequent cross-border rocket attack and Israel's vow of retaliation "by land, sea and air" against the Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrillas.

The American intervention came as Israel's security Cabinet met in emergency session and vowed instant and wide-scale action if Hezbollah fired more rockets into northern Galilee in retaliation for punishing Israeli strikes. Those

strikes were launched deep into Lebanon after the killing of General Erez Gerstein, 32. One of Israel's most famous war correspondents, Mr Rosh was buried yesterday at a funeral attended by thousands.

Israeli officials, mindful of the American call and damaging international publicity in 1996, caused by Operation Grapes of Wrath — Israel's last widespread Lebanon offensive in which some 200 people were killed — said that the Israel Defence Force would not step up attacks if the guerrillas refrained from firing rockets into Israel.

That decision was not popular with many Israelis living in the northern area. They left shelters and sealed rooms at 2pm yesterday after an "all clear" ended an alert that had lasted 24 hours and ruined the start of the festival of Purim.

Thousands fled homes and hotels to spend the holiday out of Katyusha rocket range. Many who stayed in the bleak town of Kiryat Shmona urged the Government to launch a massive offensive.

After a three-hour Cabinet session, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, announced that Israel was ready to strike at more Hezbollah targets, but refused to order the immediate offensive demanded by some Cabinet members, including Avigdor Kahalani, his Interior Security Minister. There is a threat of escalating violence with Syria as President Assad keeps 35,000 troops in Lebanon.

The death of seven Israelis in a week has made Israel's Lebanon policy a key election issue, with Yossi Beilin, a leading member of the opposition Labour Party, heading a campaign for a swift withdrawal.



A Shia Muslim guerrilla preparing yesterday for the threatened Israeli offensive

Civilians in buffer zone wait stoically for big offensive

FROM NICHOLAS BLANFORD IN TIBNINE

THE war-weary residents of south Lebanon were nervously braced for the onslaught of the Israeli military machine yesterday but the threat of a massive assault against the Hezbollah organisation failed to materialise.

Hours after Brigadier-General Erez Gerstein was killed by Hezbollah guerrillas on Sunday, warplanes staged air raids in frontline areas as Israel vowed to unleash an air, sea and ground offensive.

Tension remains high throughout the occupied border zone. The skies above Tibnine were filled with the roar of Israeli F16 aircraft and the buzz of pilotless observation planes.

In the village of Siddiqine, Mehdi Zaarour, 48, said: "I cannot get any worse for us than it already is here... we are used to being shelled by the Israelis, it is a daily occurrence."

Siddiqine is near the village of Qana, where 107 civil-

ians were killed when Israel shelled a UN base during the 16-day Operation Grapes of Wrath in April 1996. "Forty-eight people from Siddiqine were killed in Qana. What more can Israel do to us?" said Mr Zaarour.

Schools were closed yesterday and children were told to remain close to village bomb shelters.

In the village of Majdal Salm, which frequently bears the brunt of Israeli shelling, almost half the residents had fled in fear of an offensive.

"We are afraid [and] it's very tense," said Nahla Salloom, 44, one of several women watching over children outside the village's bomb shelter. "I will stay because this is my village, my land and my country. The Israelis will never force me to leave."

Maryam Zahwi, 20, said that Israel would never defeat the Lebanese. "They have their planes and missiles, but we have our resistance and our faith," she said.

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The World's Most Admired Companies, FORTUNE magazine, 26th October 1998.

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WORLD IN BRIEF

Religious riots in Indonesia kill ten

Ambon, Indonesia: At least ten people died as new clashes between Christians and Muslims rocked the Indonesian island of Ambon. Six people were tortured to death in one clash and another four were killed as security forces opened fire near a mosque. The official Antara news agency said the first deaths occurred after homemade bombs exploded. The agency added that low-ranking policemen had allegedly incited the mob.

Local journalists said the other incident happened at about dawn as Christians attacked the city's eastern Banu Merah district and Muslims fought back. Security forces then arrived and opened fire, they said. One witness said the police opened fire without warning on Muslims leaving the al-Huda mosque.

General Wiranto, the armed forces commander, has launched a crack anti-riot force to quell what he called the most "brutal rioting" in Indonesia's history. (Reuters)

Cuba dissidents on trial

Four of Cuba's most prominent political dissidents, including Vladimir Roca, went on trial behind closed doors in Havana on charges of sedition stemming from the publication of a document in 1997 that criticised government policies (David Adams writes). Tight security was enforced to keep away demonstrators, and dissident groups in Cuba say at least 34 opposition activists have been rounded up by police recently to limit any possible protest. Others are under virtual house arrest.

Greek Ocalan protest

The statue of a Greek philosopher outside Athens University, right, has been blindfolded by art students to show their support for Abdullah Ocalan, the Kurdish leader, Turkey is to allow a Norwegian parliamentary delegation to attend Mr Ocalan's treason trial after turning down other international requests. Lars Rise, a Norwegian MP, said the invitation was made by Uluc Gurkan, the vice-president of Turkey's national assembly, on condition that the Norwegians did not call themselves observers. (Reuters)



Sydney terror warning

Sydney: The Islamic terrorist, Osama bin Laden, may target the Sydney Olympics next year because of Australia's friendship with the United States, Louis Freeh, the director of the FBI, said (David Watts writes). A large contingent of American athletes and spectators could make the Games an attractive target, said Mr Freeh, who is in Australia advising the Government on anti-terrorism and anti-drug strategies. Australia has been free of Middle East-related terrorism.

Rebels 'slaughter 1,000'

Freeport: About 1,000 civilians died, mostly murdered by rebels, during a six-week Revolutionary United Front occupation of Waterloo, a town near the Sierra Leonean capital, according to Ansumana Kargbo, a headman. He said most of those who died had fled into the bush when the rebels were chased from the capital last month. Troops from Ecomog, the Nigerian-led regional intervention force, backed by civil defence groups, retook Freeport last month and recaptured Waterloo last week. (AFP)

Mines treaty enforced



Oslo: Jody Williams, left, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997, urged all nations to ratify an anti-landmine treaty as it came into force yesterday, and hailed her award as a boost for the cause. Mrs Williams, co-ordinator of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, said that 134 countries had signed and 65 had ratified the treaty, aimed at removing an estimated 100 million landmines in at least 60 countries. The treaty, concluded here in September 1997, was opened for signature in Ottawa the following December. (Reuters)

Seven die in rough seas

Lisbon: Seven crewmen died and one was missing last night after they abandoned their crippled cargo ship in rough seas off the Azores in the North Atlantic. The three remaining crew survived. A passing Japanese merchant vessel picked up four crew from a liferaft. The men had abandoned the *Sky Bird*, a container ship, officials said. However, one of the men in the raft was dead. Six other crew who jumped into the sea were found dead in the water, while a search went on for the missing man. (AP)

هكذا من الأهل

China vents its anger over Taiwan

Beijing accuses Pentagon of pushing arms sales, writes James Pringle

ON THE second day of a strained visit to China by Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, Beijing launched a furious attack on America over Pentagon reports that the Chinese were building a major missile force with the intention of intimidating Taiwan.

Zhu Bangzao, for the Foreign Ministry, said yesterday that the Pentagon report on the military situation in the Taiwan Strait was a "serious interference in China's internal affairs". The official Xinhua news agency quoted him as saying: "China expressed its serious dissatisfaction and resolute opposition."

Xinhua added that the report was part of an American plan to step up sales to Taiwan of advanced weapons such as ballistic and cruise missiles.

The Pentagon assessment—sent to Congress last week and released on Friday—did not imply that Beijing was planning to carry out an attack against Taiwan and noted that the situation in the Taiwan Strait was calm. However, it did emphasise that Beijing, which considers Taiwan a renegade province, has refused to renounce the use of force against the offshore island.

Analysts believe that, in the event of a military confrontation breaking out, Beijing could overwhelm Taiwan's



Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, and Tang Jiaxuan, the Chinese Foreign Minister, at the conclusion of their joint press conference in Beijing yesterday

current missile defences and superior air force by 2005, thanks to the sheer weight of numbers of its weapons.

American law allows sales of defensive arms to Taiwan despite both Washington's transfer of diplomatic ties to Beijing in 1979 and China's opposition to any arms sales to the island. Washington has angered Beijing by selling F16 warplanes, Patriot missiles and other advanced weapons to Taipei.

In an illustration of the blunt nature of the current Sino-American dialogue, Ms

Albright said at a joint press conference with her Chinese opposite number that Washington deplored Beijing's crackdown on pro-democracy activists, while Tan Jiaxuan, the Chinese Foreign Minister, accused the US of "wantonly interfering in other countries' affairs".

Mr Tang added: "A handful of anti-China elements within the United States is going all out to interfere with and obstruct the normal development of China-US relations."

"We have always been opposed to politicising the

human rights question and to wantonly interfering in other countries' affairs by using human rights questions as an excuse," he added.

But Ms Albright, who yesterday also met Zhu Rongji, the Prime Minister, said that human rights were a "question of grave concern".

In a reference to the crackdown on dissent that began late last year, and continued this past weekend with the detention or jailing of several dissidents, Ms Albright added: "We have deplored the actions that have taken place recently

and I will raise these issues with the Foreign Minister."

Last Friday the US State Department released an annual report saying that human rights deteriorated sharply in China last year. Quarrels over human rights, satellite sales and defence policy show that the goodwill from summit meetings in the past two years between President Clinton and his Chinese opposite number, Jiang Zemin, did not lead to a unified point of view.

But Ms Albright and Mr Tang also said that, in the long term, relations had improved

and they were committed to narrowing the differences between their countries. China yesterday issued a critique of human rights in America, emphasising its rampant gun violence, overcrowded prisons, racial discrimination and poverty.

Meanwhile, an activist in southern China yesterday launched a second opposition party, the China Rights Party, which aimed to promote civil rights. The earlier China Democracy Party, launched last year, has been under severe attack from Chinese security

agencies, with several leaders being given long jail terms. □ Out in open: China has jeered all Beijing's foreigner-restricted areas—set up in 1958 to protect "state secrets". Foreigners found in the areas, marked by 118 checkpoints and usually containing military barracks or accommodation for top-level officials, would be removed. Some were deported. Most areas were opened in 1985, since when all but two of the last restrictions had gone. Last year about 2.13 million foreigners visited the city. (AFP)

'Stolen' children sue the state for damages

FROM DAVID WATTS IN SYDNEY

LORNA CUBILLO wept uncontrollably as she relived the horror of the day in 1947 when she was wrenched from her family. She is middle-aged now but has never forgotten the day she was put on a lorry with 16 other children aged from seven months to 11 years and taken from her parents. Ms Cubillo is one of the "stolen generation".

She told her story yesterday in Darwin at the opening of a legal case against the Federal Government seeking compensation for the suffering visited on Aboriginal children under the White Australia Policy.

As the lorry pulled away a baby was dumped in Lorna Cubillo's arms and she, a seven-year-old, was told she would be responsible for it. At first, she thought she was going on a picnic, but the screaming of the grief-stricken Aboriginal mothers, racing after the lorry, alerted her that this was no picnic. It turned out to be a two-day drive through outback Northern Territory to Darwin and nine years in an institution.

Her story, and that of thousands of other Aboriginals forcefully assimilated as part of the White Australia Policy, is something the country is struggling to come to terms with.

When Peter Gunner was grabbed he believed he was going to be killed. "I didn't see the welfare blokes and they grabbed me and held me by the arms and dragged me to the truck. I went mad screaming to my family to help me, but they didn't move. They couldn't do nothing about it."

He is a joint party with Ms Cubillo in the first civil action of its kind being brought against the Government by the stolen generation. They are seeking both compensatory and punitive damages for wrongful imprisonment and breach of a vast range of duties. A previous case, brought by other plaintiffs in 1997 on constitutional grounds, failed.

But if this action is successful it will have implications not only for 700 others seeking similar redress but also the 30,000 or so British orphans who were sent to Australia, beginning in the inter-war period. It will leave Australia with little choice but to confront the question of compensation.

Military maverick declared Nigeria poll victor

General must show he is not army stooge, writes Sam Kiley in Lagos

THE former Nigerian military leader General Olusegun Obasanjo was returned to power as an elected civilian President yesterday by a huge margin, amid accusations of vote rigging and cheating from his rival and international monitors. Olufemi Falae, the loser, called the elections a farce.

Jimmy Carter, former US President and leader of an observer team, agreed that there were widespread irregularities. But cheating was not confined to General Obasanjo's

supporters in the People's Democratic Party. Mr Falae's All People's Party was equally at fault, according to the Nigerian Transition Monitoring Group, which deployed 10,700 observers across the country.

General Obasanjo pledged to continue the process of democracy and said that he did not believe that any elections

could be perfect after his 63 per cent win was formally announced. Nigerians will now be looking to the general to make good his campaign pledge to stamp out corruption and show that he is no stooge of the armed forces, anxious to keep a handle on power.

To many members of his own Yoruba tribe of the south-

west in particular, he is nothing more than a stalking horse for a northerner-dominated military unwilling to leave Nigeria's political stage open to civilians. To his supporters in the north, he will be a trustworthy custodian of their interests. He has allowed them to let go control of the presidency and favour a power shift to the south without risking a national fragmentation.

However, the general has a habit of confounding both his critics and his fans.

Born to humble farmers in 1937, General Obasanjo finished his high school education, but was too poor to take up a university place. Like many growing up in the transition from British colonial rule to independence in October 1960, he saw a future for himself in the army, which provided an education at the Mons Officers' Cadet School in England, and engineering training in Shrivensham, Oxfordshire. Service with the

United Nations in Congo was followed by the Biafran War in 1967.

It was in Biafra where he earned national recognition in a daring, maverick manoeuvre. Ignoring orders from Lagos and the operational plans of a rival divisional commander to the north of secessionist Biafra, the then Colo-

nel Obasanjo launched a surprise attack on the breakaway region, forced a surrender and emerged a national hero—much to the irritation of Nigeria's generals and other divisional commanders.

"It was a shock and embarrassment that, while we were waiting for our own D-Day which had been planned for January 15, he invaded from

the south and got all the glory," said retired Major-General Theophilus Danjuma, then a colonel and now a close friend tipped to be Defence Minister. General Obasanjo, 61, has been President before, when he took over after a military leader, Murtala Muhammed, was assassinated in 1975.

Four years later he became the only military dictator to hand power back voluntarily to civilians. General Abdulsalam Abubakar will hand the presidency to General Obasanjo at the end of May. The latter's relative poverty, and role as a Commonwealth emissary to apartheid South Africa have ensured him international and domestic credibility.

"One cannot help feeling that he's probably the only person around who might be able to do the job," said Karl Maier, an observer at the elections and West Africa analyst.

RESULTS

Official voting figures:
Obasanjo: 18,738,000 (62.8%)
Falae: 11,110,000 (37.2%)



Obasanjo has vowed to stamp out corruption

A couple (male and female) both non-smokers, aged 25, applying for a PEP mortgage of £60,000 secured over 25 years on a property with a purchase price of £57,000. Assuming a discounted mortgage completed on 10th May 1999 with conveyancer's charges £117.50, solicitor's fee £165, mortgage discharge fee £25, deeds dispatch fee £25, initial interest £26.25 and also that mortgage repaid at end of mortgage term and interest rate of 3.49% APR applies throughout the mortgage term, the product, the discount of 2.5%, ends on 30th April 2001, and we charge our full variable basic rate from then on. This is currently 6.59%. Monthly mortgage payment £171.02 over the 300 monthly payments. Monthly PEP payments £22.78. Total amount payable £114,072. Calls may be answered and recorded. You must be aged 18 or over and give us a mortgage over your property. We may need additional mortgage security. We will take into account your personal and financial circumstances and the value or price of your property. These and the product you choose will affect how much we lend you, how much contribution towards valuation fees you may get and what, if any, additional mortgage security fee, arrangement fee and repayment fee you have to pay. This product or offer is only available to customers re-mortgaging and all home buyers. Our products and offers are subject to conditions. We can withdraw them without notice. For more details and further questions, ask at your local office. With discounted rates, the special interest rate will only apply during the special rate period. The special rate period will end on 30th April 2001. If you repay a special rate loan before the end of the repayment term, we will charge you a repayment fee. The repayment fee earned will end on 30th April 2001. The repayment fee will be a percentage of the special rate loan amount. We have worked out the APRs assuming that this rate applies throughout the mortgage term. In practice, we charge a variable basic interest rate at the end of any special rate period. This service is not available for mortgages on property on the Isle of Man. Our final decision to lend depends on the value or price of your property.

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Police had to rescue Anwar in cell attack

BY DAVID WATTS

ANWAR IBRAHIM was lucky to escape with his life when he was assaulted while handcuffed and blindfolded by the then Malaysian chief of police last year. The commission of inquiry into the beating has already heard medical testimony that his injuries were potentially fatal.

Yesterday Yacob Muhammad Amin, the director of the Criminal Investigation Department, testified that he and his deputy had to pull Rahim Noor, the police chief, off the former Deputy Prime Minister to stop the assault.

Mr Yacob said that he was outside the cell when he heard a voice in Malay saying: "Don't hit me". He and his deputy, Ramli Yusof, rushed inside. "Then I saw Tan Sri Rahim [Noor]. I grabbed his belt and pulled him with my right hand towards me, with my left hand holding the bar of the cell... Rahim was pushing Rahim away and I pushed Rahim out of the cell. We had to get Rahim out of the cell."

All this happened on a day when the police chief later assured the foreign press that Mr Anwar was "safe and well".

Halim Mansar, a forensic science expert at Kuala Lumpur General Hospital, examined Mr Anwar four days after the assault and he testified that there were multiple injuries that were "very dangerous for the victim. The extent of the injuries was very severe".

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مكتبة النور

STOLEN children sue the state for damages

Car fumes make Los Angeles the cancer capital

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

CANCER-CAUSING chemicals in car exhaust fumes have left residents of Los Angeles hundreds of times more at risk of fatal disease than the federal Clean Air Act allows, according to a government study that is likely to send shock-waves through the healthcare and automotive industries.

The congressional study of air quality in America's second-largest city, published yesterday, reveals airborne carcinogens at levels 426 times higher than those established as safe nine years ago.

The alarming figures "should give a jolt" to the city, a spokeswoman for the Natural Resources Defence Council in Washington, said. "We know our air is dirty, but now we know in black and white that it's toxic too," he added.

Los Angeles smog, which for decades has driven film stars to the coast for the relief

brought by onshore breezes, has already prompted the nation's toughest car emissions standards.

But yesterday's report showed that little has been done to curb invisible compounds in vehicle exhaust that target internal organs and may be behind the region's stubbornly high cancer levels.

Butadiene, benzene and formaldehyde cause tumours in human lungs, breasts, ovaries, livers, thyroid glands, testes and other organs, tests have shown.

All three are present at unusually high levels in the air over the Los Angeles basin, where clinics such as the John Wayne Cancer Centre have treated a steady stream of famous — and merely rich — cancer victims, including Larry Hagman, Michael Landon and Gilda Radner.

"It appears that motor vehicles create the largest portion of the toxic risk in terms of their emissions," Barry Wallerstein of the local Air Quality Management District said.

The Clean Air Act set a target of exposing only one American in a million to the risk of cancer through bad air quality. In Los Angeles that index is now at 470 per million, the study found, while in neighbouring Burbank, where much of the film industry is based, 493 per million are at risk.

Smoking is still more dangerous than breathing the air in Los Angeles — 250 times more dangerous for an adult with a one-pack-per-day habit, according to the report.

Nonetheless, American environmentalists hope that it may not be long before, in a hitherto unthinkable development, petrol-burning cars are required to carry public health warnings.

Britain, has standards for two of the chemicals identified in the California study — benzene and butadiene (Nigel Hawkes writes). Both are exceeded in urban streets, but improvements now being made should mean that the standards are met by 2005.

But Roger Higman, of Friends of the Earth, said that there may even then be hot-spots in the centres of cities, and around petrol stations, where levels continued to exceed the limits. Both of these chemicals are present in fuel and reach the air as it is pumped into cars.

Last year the European Commission proposed a tougher limit on benzene. To meet it, emissions will have to fall by 70 per cent more than already planned. Similar limits on other carcinogens, including butadiene, are expected to follow.

The Californian figures sound alarming, and at face value they represent an extra 470 cases of cancer per million people. But as 250,000 people in every million can expect to contract cancer, this represents about 2 per cent.

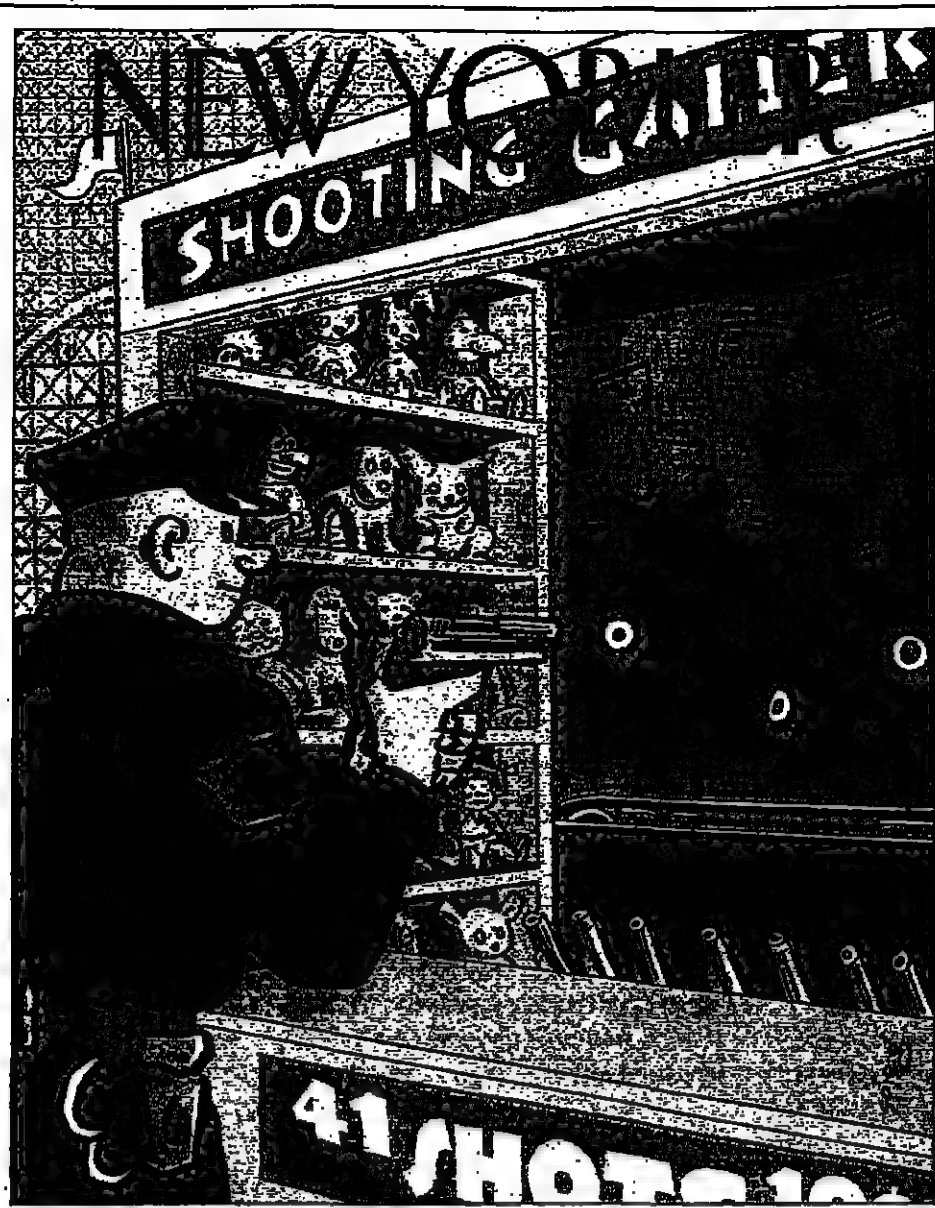


Ford's outside four-wheel-drive vehicle, the Excursion

King of the road is here

IT IS the size and weight of a respectable log cabin, but so much more versatile (Giles Whittell writes). With room for the entire extended family and three average cars' worth of luggage, the Ford Excursion will be the largest mass-produced four-wheel-drive when launched later this year.

Unveiled last week at Ford's Michigan headquarters, the Excursion is expected to prove once and for all that size does matter in the heartland. Longer and wider than its biggest rival, the Chevrolet Suburban, the \$50,000 (£35,000) Excursion is nearly 19 feet long and weighs 3.5 tonnes when empty. The sporty version will offer a stately ten miles per gallon on city streets.



The latest New Yorker showing a policeman shooting civilian silhouettes at a fair

New Jersey police chief is sacked for racial 'slur'

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

ONE of America's top policemen has been fired for suggesting that drugs crimes are associated with particular ethnic groups, and accusing Jamaicans of running his state's heroin trade.

Colonel Carl Williams, the superintendent of New Jersey's state police, had been at the centre of a controversy over allegations of "racial profiling" in apprehending drivers since white officers fired 11 times at four unarmed non-white youths whose car was pulled over on the way to a basketball game in April.

In an interview with a local newspaper, Colonel Williams condemned "racial profiling"

and denied it was practised by his force. But he insisted it was naive to believe that race was not an issue in drug trafficking and other crimes.

"Two weeks ago the President of the United States went to Mexico to talk to the President of Mexico about drugs," he said. "He didn't go to Ireland. He didn't go to England..."

"If you are looking at the methamphetamine market, that seems to be controlled by the motorcycle gangs, which are basically white," he added. "If you are looking at heroin and stuff like that, your involvement there is more or less Jamaican."

Black politicians, churchmen and civil rights activists expressed outrage, and Christine Todd Whitman, the Governor, dismissed Colonel Williams.

Controversy over police racism is also raging in New York, where four white members of a "street crimes" unit shot dead a Guinean immigrant armed only with a pepper, firing a total of 41 times.

The police union protested yesterday against a "grossly offensive" cartoon on the cover of the latest New Yorker, showing police at a fairground shooting gallery with a sign reading "41 shots, 10 cents."

Senators seek to avert risk of Armageddon

Ian Brodie in Washington

reports on a plan to beat the millennium bug

TWO American senators want experts from the nuclear powers to get together next New Year's Eve to eliminate any chance of a year 2000 (Y2K) computer problem triggering a false missile alert.

The experts would assemble at a temporary centre in Colorado Springs, where America's missile-tracking headquarters — the North American Aerospace Defence Command — is buried deep inside Cheyenne Mountain.

Russia has already agreed to a proposal by Washington to set up a temporary joint early warning system to avoid any risk of the Y2K millennium bug causing a nuclear Armageddon. But the senators are recommending that America should try to bring the other nuclear powers, including China, India and Pakistan, to Colorado Springs.

The pair, Robert Bennett, a Republican, and Christopher Dodd, a Democrat, are leading a Senate committee on the Y2K problem.

Mr Dodd said the experts should be in the same room for the critical period when older computer systems — using only the last two digits of a year — could malfunction by misreading the year 2000 as 1900. "If something does break down, we've got people there who can monitor it and make quick decisions," he said.

The missile watchers at Cheyenne Mountain do not believe in principle that there is any danger of an inadvertent nuclear launch caused by the Y2K bug. Missiles are not, after all, fired by computers, but by human commands. They do see a risk, however, of confusion in the event of one country suffering a blackout or breakdown in the power supply to its nuclear systems that could leave other countries "blind" to its intentions.

The experts would sit at a round table and be in touch with their head offices by telephone. They would be able to give reassurances if any of them showed signs of having a problem.

The proposed name for the Armageddon watch room is the Centre for the Year 2000 Strategic Stability. Edward Warner, the Under-Secretary of Defence, will go to Moscow with a Pentagon working

group this month to meet their Russian counterparts and make plans for the centre. It will be operational from the beginning of December this year until the middle of January 2000.

A continuous stream of information will be made available to the Russians via American satellites and ground sensors.

Last year, Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin agreed to pursue development of a permanent joint early warning centre in Russia to continuously share data on missile launches. But it will not be ready by the end of the year.

Pentagon officials said the Russians knew about the bug and its potential for disruption, but had not yet dedicated enough money or people to fight it.

A report from the two senators says an accidental nuclear launch is unlikely. But Mr Bennett said: "When we get to New Year's Eve, everybody, no matter how informed we think we are, is going to be holding his breath."

The senators also gave a warning of non-nuclear millennium problems in America, including potential power cuts and problems in doctors' surgeries and hospitals, where Y2K preparations are lagging badly.

They stopped short of issuing a Doomsday warning, but said Americans would be well advised to stock up on two or three days' supplies of food, much as they would for a blizzard.

LINKS
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/y2000/index.htm> — Home Office site with information about the response of public sector bodies to the bug.
<http://www.bbc2000.co.uk/> — Website of the Action 2000 Agency.
<http://www.microsoft.com/technet/year2k/> — The Microsoft Year 2000 Centre, with information about how Microsoft products are affected by the bug.

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'Female Viagra' revellers suffer seizures

New York: Revellers at a wild birthday party on Manhattan's Upper West Side started dropping to the floor and two women were rushed to hospital with breathing difficulties after guests took a herbal remedy dubbed the "female Viagra" (James Bone writes).

Partygoers were drinking beer with chasers of "Invigorator" — touted as a miracle drug that can put users in a good mood, help them to lose weight, build muscle and improve their sex lives. The lemon-flavoured drug contains a compound known as gamma-butyrolactone, or GBL — also used in "date-rape" by men who slip it into women's drinks.

The dietary supplement was pulled from chemists' shelves in January when the US Food and Drug Administration reported that 55 people had suffered adverse reactions to substances containing GBL, including one woman who died. It can still be purchased on the Internet, where it is described as the "Fountain of Youth".

As many as a dozen people at Saturday's party fell ill, having downed shots of the potion, which is meant to be taken by the teaspoonful. "The party was out of control," said one host. "People were dropping to the floor and having seizures."

You don't have to be French to shop in Calais.

The shopping forecast.

Attention all shoppers, especially in areas a short hop from Dover.

Here is the shopping forecast from the English Channel.

Dover to Calais - crossings, frequent.

Shopping prices falling steadily.

Wines plentiful from all regions with bargains, imminent.

Bries moderate. Other cheeses also excellent.

Hotel accommodation - good.

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There'll be a few passengers unwinding as the day goes on and we'll see more ferries along shortly.

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Calais begins with sea.

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31p
40p
38p
7p

The idle vow that cost £1m, payable in sweat

John Spurling is running the London Marathon against all advice, says Jon Ashworth

Many people say things they regret after a drink or two, but few on the scale of John Spurling, a semi-retired businessman. Last year, over drinks in Langman's Brasserie, he agreed to compete in this year's Flora London Marathon despite never having run anywhere in his life. Worse, he pledged to raise £1 million for charity.

Overweight and out of condition, Spurling, 59, embarked on a training programme under which he will have run 1,500 miles by the time his ordeal is over. Even his trainer tried to talk him out of it. But Spurling is a man obsessed, and on marathon day, April 18, he intends to complete the 26 miles even if it takes all day.

Spurling has spent much of his life in Kenya, which is known for its long-distance runners. He has attracted pledges of £50,000 so far, which, if he finishes the marathon, will easily outstrip the previous individual best of £444,000, raised in 1982 by Sir Roger Gibbs to fund a new body scanner at Guy's Hospital. His endeavours will benefit animals and children, through the Animal Health Trust and the Lord's Taverners, whose chairman is a close friend.

Preparing an out-of-shape man for such a punishing ordeal is no small challenge. Spurling runs at least ten miles a day, six days a week, using a treadmill in his Central London flat, and admits that it has been tough. "The first time I tried to touch my toes, I could only get to my knees," he says. "I'd never done any exercise except golf."

Five months into his training, he has run 800 miles, his blood pressure is down and he has lost weight. "I cut out all carbohydrates except for a bowl of cereal in the morning — no bread, no rice, no pasta — and I started losing weight fast. The body's fat turns into carbohydrates, so it starts to eat the fat away."

Weight loss or not, people think he is crazy. John Major, who has pledged money, told Spurling he had "lost his marbles". Sir Denis Thatcher, on hearing of his quest at a Lord's Taverners event, shouted:

"When's the memorial service?" His trainer, Lee Saxby, a former RAF engineer, is almost as unforgiving. "A marathon is an unnatural event," he says. "The first guy who did it in Ancient Greece got to the end and died. It ages you and it's hell for your joints."

Spurling received a letter from an orthopaedic surgeon pleading to pay him £1,000 not to run. He told Spurling: "I've had enough of silly old sods doing exercise they shouldn't be doing." More than 40,000 runners sign up for the London Marathon but only 30,000 run on the day. Injuries claim the rest.

Saxby says: "Compared with sprinters, marathon runners look terrible. They lose all their muscle and age very quickly. All that mileage and the oxygen going out of their bodies damages the cells and speeds up the ageing process."

He admits to thinking twice before taking Spurling on. "John had every risk factor in the book. He's male, and guys tend to drop dead of cardiovascular disease more than females. He was overweight, had high blood pressure and had been inactive for most of his life. In theory, no, he shouldn't be doing it."

Marathon runners talk about "hitting the wall" at a certain point in a race — usually around 20 miles, when the body's store of carbohydrates runs out and it starts to burn fat. Spurling jokes that he hits the wall after 300 yards. "Every day I ask myself, why I am doing this? They say your body releases a chemical that makes you look forward to training. That hasn't happened to me yet."

Spurling has a host of celebrities egging him on, from Jeffrey Archer to Bobby Charlton. Michael Aspel and Geoff Hurst. Sebastian Coe is providing encouragement. Spurling's aim is to work up to 20 miles on his treadmill, then tackle the 26 miles for the first time on the day. "I run a mile, then walk for a minute. That seems to be what my body is accepting," he says. "I'd be thrilled to do it in five hours."

Although he makes light of it, people do drop dead in marathons and there must be a risk in punishing your body in this way. His wife, Gwyneth, says she panicked initially, but takes comfort from the fact that there have been only five marathon deaths in 18 years. Whatever happens, the charities will get their money. Spurling has insured his life for £1 million — just in case.

Anyone who wishes to support John Spurling can send donations to The Animal Health Trust/Lord's Taverners Marathon Challenge, 22 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AA. Everyone who makes a pledge will receive a thank-you certificate signed by more than 40 celebrities. Cheques should be made payable to AHIT/LTaverners Marathon Run.

I tried to touch my toes but I could only reach my knees



John Spurling (left) limbers up in Hyde Park with his personal trainer, Lee Saxby. He trains on a treadmill at home

Pushing the body beyond normal limits

AVID runners need have no worries about their cardiovascular system. Provided it was normal when they start the London Marathon, the heart will still be beating bravely at the finishing line.

There is no evidence that strenuous physical exercise in temperate climatic conditions does any long-term damage to the heart, and runners are therefore unlikely to expire en route. There are occasional deaths among athletes, but this is usually the result of a dangerous arrhythmia; the result of undetected disease.

Although minor arrhythmias are common during heavy exercise, they don't usually cause disasters and when they do, it is usually because the runners were unaware that their coronary arteries were in poor fettle, either because they had some congenital disease of the arteries or the aortic valve, or more frequently that their coronary arteries were already plagued with atheroma. This is the fatty material that furs up arteries — sudden exercise sometimes causes one of the plaques adherent to the artery wall to rupture, with the result that debris may block a vital artery. Occasionally, calamity follows an undetected cardiomyopathy, an overgrowth of heart muscle and enlargement of the heart to the point where it no longer functions efficiently.

None of the marathon runners should be taking part if they have a temperature, or even if they think they are sickening for a dose of flu or other infection. The heart is much more vulnerable to transitory infection than is sometimes realised, and it is thought that some of the unexpected sudden deaths in young athletes each year are because, despite having a temperature, they have ventured out on to the pitch rather than sitting by a warm fire.

Detecting heart disease in an athlete isn't always easy. Some endurance athletes who, day by day build up their physical prowess, develop the athletic heart syndrome. The heart becomes enlarged, the heart rate becomes very slow, and they develop various changes in their ECG pattern that strike terror into the non-specialist doctor, particularly as the patient may also have acquired a multiplicity of murmurs. Although a harmless syndrome, it is not a diagnosis that can be made in five minutes at the end of a busy surgery and its true nature should be confirmed by an expert.

If athletes were chased by a

pack of hounds down the Embankment and were then bundled away by human rights protesters, their blood serum analysed and their urine examined for traces of haemolysed blood, the results would be alarming. Every headline next day would be crying out for such a cruel sport to be abandoned, and earnest doctors would discuss whether, if it hadn't been for their skilful attention, the runner would have died. Marathon running certainly pushes the body beyond the limits that it would normally have to endure, and there is transitory damage to the muscles and joints.

Although marathon runners are at risk of exposing hitherto unsuspected heart disease, they are more likely to suffer from other problems over the years. The runner should remember that he hasn't the hounds of hell chasing him, and that even if television cameras are present, and everybody from the office is cheering him on, it is essential

to stop if the pain is intolerable. Likewise, stop if chest pain or a very severe headache is noticed. Feeling dizzy, loss of concentration and orientation so that everything becomes a blur is an indication that it is time to melt into the crowds after visiting the first-aid tent.

In the unlikely event of a very hot day, heatstroke and heat exhaustion are risks for the unfit. Pounding the pavements results in excessive wear and tear of the spine and arthritis of the intervertebral joints — this is only partially prevented by having shock-absorbent soles on roomy trainers and doing as much running as possible on grass. Knees and feet are also affected and the arches of the athlete's feet are likely to be as painful and flat as those of the proverbial policeman. Toes are hammered against the end of the shoes when running; the nails when raised from their bed make an ideal cranny for fungi and athlete's foot.

The overenthusiastic athlete may also pay an emotional price. Research a few years ago showed that marathon runners are more likely to divorce — psychiatrists regard excessive exercise as an interesting symptom.

MEDICINE CHEST
DR THOMAS STUTTAFOORD

Harder they run, higher they fly

Addictive side-effects and a sense of achievement motivate the contestants, as Victoria Fletcher discovers

For most of the British public, the Flora London Marathon is an almost alien event. Stuffed in living rooms, they watch with puffed-out chests the breed of forlorn creatures that are runners. A unanimous conclusion is voiced: runners are nuts.

Although it is true that to run 26.2 miles requires determination, psychologists suggest that it is not such an impossible feat as most of the voyeurs might think. In fact, thanks to chemicals released by the brain when exercise is taken, running becomes an addiction.

Alma Thomas, a sports psychologist and co-ordinator for UK Athletics, argues that almost anybody could run a marathon, whatever their sporting history.

"There is nothing to say that you need to be a certain type of person to run, have a certain physique or have a tough mental state. Many people are dragged into it and may not be enthusiastic when they start training, but most find that they become addict-

ed to the physiological side-effects of exercise," she says.

These side-effects are crucial in motivating many of the less likely marathon runners to continue their gruelling training regimes. When intensive exercise is undertaken, a reaction occurs in the brain to quell the physical pain and mental torture. Research has shown that these natural endorphins have the same effect as drugs such as heroin. The athlete feels elated and his or her sense of pain is suppressed.

"The endorphins make runners feel 'high'," Thomas says. "Combine this with the fact that being fit makes people feel good about themselves and their bodies, and even the most lethargic manage to keep on training."

Control is also important for runners. Thomas believes that many people who feel they are not achieving in other areas of their lives get a

sense of reward from completing their training and improving their times.

"Many people never feel that they can do it. Then they train and realise that they can reach little targets. They are in control and build confidence until they begin to run greater distances," she says. "However, when they stop, they often get a sense of depression because both the psychological and physiological rewards stop."

Keeping the mind occupied and determined is one of the hardest battles for the marathon runner. Dr Sarah Rowell is a sports science consultant and former British women's marathon record holder. Despite her talent and fitness, she admits that there was not a single race where she did not consider dropping out. "The mental challenge is almost greater than the physi-

cal challenge. You can train and be fit for the race, but how your mind works is what will make the difference. I would always want to stop and give up at the halfway mark, but then I would pull through that awful period and go on to break records."

Rowell's research with some of the country's top athletes has led her to believe that there are two types of marathon runner. Most amateurs cope with the pain and boredom by thinking of unrelated subjects, from their jobs to what they will eat for supper. Her research suggests that although this is more enjoyable, it can depress performance. Runners who become obsessive over heart rate and physical composure run faster.

"We have found that the people who think about the race, concentrate on their pace, their breathing, the next water-stop and their aches

and pains will achieve better times than those who switch off," she says.

For the runners who do manage to finish the 26-mile slog, an even more interesting psychological conundrum awaits. Instead of relaxing, the obsessive interest in exercise can move to new extremes. "After one race, people often find that they are addicted physically and mentally," Rowell says. "They need a tougher challenge. That is when most decide to run in fancy-dress."

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هكذا من الأهل

Sceptic seeks New Age therapy

If I am the low point of the day, when the living lie awake and anxious, and the dying relinquish their hold on life, then late winter is the turn of the year, when one's complexion goes as grey as the sky and one's immune system sags like boiled knicker elastic.

The resolutions with which one began January in such confidence (gym three times a week; think serene thoughts instead of shouting at children; only one glass of wine with dinner) have faded, adding a sense of failure to add to one's list of self-reproach about being an evil-tempered Slack A-tize with a big bum. There are many short-term strategies for weathering this unlovely season: a week's skiing, a facial, a trip to the sales in search of cashmere comfort clothing. But every so often one reaches a point where such palliatives don't work any more.

This was my state early this year; frustration had been heaped upon disappointment in 1998. Things reached a climax just before Christmas in the form of a frightening health scare. I have devised ways of blunting the sharp tooth of adversity: a moan to a patient friend, a glass of red wine, a fat 19th-century novel or an hour's energetic bouncing on the back of a horse. But by New Year's Eve I felt that what was happening to me was well beyond the power of Château Tassin to alleviate.

So after a lifetime's scepticism, with never so much as a whiff of an aromatherapist's essence, I found myself setting off on a journey into the unknown realm of complementary therapy.

I began at Lifestyle Management, in Wimpole Street, Central London. In its press release the consultancy, run by Jane Townsend and Alix Needham,



Jane Shilling had never had so much as a whiff of an aromatherapist's essence when a disastrous year finally made her cast aside her natural scepticism and go in search of natural remedies

urges: "Take stock, throw off old baggage, revitalise your life. Geri did it. Cher did it. Madonna did it. Now you can do it."

Needham was reassuringly matter-of-fact about how she might help to improve my life. She spent a year studying in India after leaving teaching, before returning to London in the 1980s, designer boom and thinking that since people were so keen to have designer everything — cars, kitchens, clothes, babies — why not a designer lifestyle?

Lifestyle Management offers ways of identifying and achieving goals, junking baggage and habits. Clients might include a successful thirtysomething woman whose career had flourished at the expense of her emotional life, or a middle-aged man who could not decide whether to leave his wife and begin afresh with his mistress.

Needham's role is to encourage people to break free of their "comfort zones" of habit, envisage what their life might be and then devise the means by which they might arrive at the desired state. The process generally takes five to ten sessions, at about £80 a visit.

So, asked Needham, what was my problem? Oh, usual working mother's stuff, said I. Too much to do, no time to do it all, resulting in exhaustion, bad temper and the looks and manner of a flesh-eating zombie. Ten minutes' deft questioning broke the problem down

into three parts: better organisation of my work, providing time for myself, and work on understanding why I find it so hard to stop doing chores (not for nothing is the Shilling family motto "You're Not Here to Enjoy Yourself").

"Now you're going to go into a relaxed state," said Needham. I was to shut my eyes while she counted to ten. I was to imagine that in my right hand I held my professional self, in my left, myself as a child. What would the child say to her parents about how she had grown up? Oh dear. The prospect of saying anything at all on that subject was too awful to contemplate, even in a state of alleged relaxation. No, really, I couldn't. Perhaps, said I, squirming, but trying not to be unhelpful, I could tell my child self that I was a grown-up now, so it didn't matter how I'd been brought up. Fine, said Needham. Now I was to join my hands symbolically together, she would count to ten again, and I could open my eyes. She then set me some "tasks": for example, I was to ask my nanny for an evening's babysitting a week, then reorganise my work schedule to accommodate a night off.

I ask my nanny to babysit once a year, but emboldened by Alix's can-do approach, I mumbled something like,

if it wasn't too much trouble, might she consider it? Delighted, she replied.

Dazzled by my new, pleasure-filled lifestyle, I set off in good humour for my session of Rosen bodywork with Ulrike Tham. Tham trained as a nurse in Sweden, where her interest in complementary medicine grew from a sense that her patients were overmedicated. She then encountered Marion Rosen, a German Jewish refugee whose work with a former student of Jung convinced her of the link between mind and body, and led her to devise a system of gentle massage intended to put clients in touch, emotionally and physically, with their "core selves" — it is based on the premise that each of us has an "authentic" self with which we gradually lose touch through the adoption of the masks and stratagems imposed by social conditioning.

then proceeded to identify the spinal curvature that my doctor had assured me was imperceptible, the paralysing shyness from which I had thought ten years of talking to strangers for a living might have cured, and another, even less creditable quality.

"You're a little fighter, aren't you?" she said kindly. Oh dear. Old cross-patch, my son would say. Well, yes, I do feel the need to fight for every inch of ground, I admitted, as briskly as one can while lying semi-naked on a table. I was determined not to succumb to a weepy recital of my little joys and sorrows. "Reaction during treatment varies widely," Tham's leaflet had warned. "Some want to talk, laugh or cry." Not me. Perhaps, said Tham as I dressed and prepared to leave, something will come out in your dreams. "Never have a dream I can remember," I said.

I went home, feeling relaxed and interested in what Tham had said, but no different. That night I had a vivid, disagreeable dream about making an exhausting journey, with lots of difficult connections. You didn't have to be Jung to work it out. The next night I had an even milder dream, so awful that I never allow my conscious mind near it. And the next morning, in unexpected and terminal fashion, that source of anguish put an end to itself.

Spooky or what? said I to a friend, a scientific rationalist. "Pooh!" she cried, explaining it away in terms of manipulation of the parasympathetic nervous system. Parasympathetic nervous system or what, if I were Tham, I'd be glad they don't burn witches any more.



Esprit de core: get in touch with your authentic self

'Spin your throat chakra in a clockwise direction.' Eh?

BODY

In my exploration of complementary therapies, I had begun to address the sensations of panic and discontent that hover over the lives of many women. Emotionally there seemed a possibility of improvement, but physically? To work full-time, run a house and raise a child single-handed, even with the help of an excellent nanny and loyal, patient friends, is a strain that the human frame was not meant to bear for long. Modern mothers, it has been pointed out, lead the lives of Victorian skivvies, and it shows. However firmly one tells oneself to buck up, the mirror tells its own story.

In my case, the grey complexion and purple rings under the eyes had become so alarming that I was putting in half an hour's work with lipstick and concealer before the school run for fear the other mummies might notice that Alexander was being delivered by Morficia Addams. Moreover, I am permanently exhausted and have the evil temper of the nasty old woman I shall become if I don't watch out. None of this adds up to an illness; certainly nothing I'd bother the GP with. But I have an overpowering sense that I am running on empty and that it can't go on for much longer.

The Balance Clinic on the Kings Road, Chelsea, is the place to go if one feels end-of-tetherish. The detailing is a mixture of the smug vernacular and the quasi-religious. A young woman in white linen pyjamas presides over an altar-like reception desk on which burns a scented candle. Angelic music floats, barely audible, on the air, and on a low table scattered with magazines sits a bowl filled with little slips of card, printed with Beautiful Thoughts: "Be like the angels: share on Earth and live in God," read mine. Perched on Zest magazine was a book, *The Voice of the Silence*, by Madame Blavatsky. Wondering what that preposterous figure was doing in this madish grotto, I opened



Reiki healing may be accompanied by intense visions or sensations of colours. Sometimes a person's aura is perceived

it at random. "The mind is the great slayer of the real," it observed, sternly.

I had come to the clinic to see Ba Harvey, who, with a combination of kinesiology and reiki, might sort out what ailed me, and do something about it. Harvey, a hygienic figure with blonde hair and a tight white trouser suit, took me into a consulting room with a huge table and a shelf full of lozenges. There was a detailed medical questionnaire (the broken collarbone I sustained after being knocked down by a cycle decades ago might be "linked to depression") and then I clambered, clothed but for my shoes, on to the massage table.

Kinesiology is a technique of testing muscle resistance, from which certain "deductions" (complementary therapists recoil from the word "diagnosis" like vampires from garlic) may be made about "imbalances" in the system, and means — massage, nutritional supplements, acupuncture etc. — of rectifying them.

Harvey tested the resistance of my main joints, and revealed a liver imbalance. Then she put wheat grains at the base of my throat. More tests showed a wheat allergy, of which I had been unaware. Then large tones were laid on my navel, and a gentle grip of my wrist signalled which page to consult about a problem or its solution. Part of me was awed by the murmuring intensity of it all; another — imagining what I looked like with my feet and head sticking out at either end and the rest covered in books — was fighting a fit of giggles.

We moved on to reiki — healing, which is sometimes accompanied by intense visions or colours. (Mine were those of a comfortable doze.) Harvey perceived an aura, which I was put out to have missed, though consoled by the luxury of having spent a weekday afternoon flat on my back doing absolutely nothing.

The next appointment was

with Serena Smith, a hypnotherapist specialising in flower essences, who works from her flat in North London. The atmosphere combines the spiritual with the domestic: family photographs, crystal eggs and miniature Mars bars, a powerful scent of incense and a harpist's Post-it — "I am successful and creative." — on the word-processor screen. Smith is 60 and an advert for her own programme: she

has clear, firm skin and bright, brown eyes. Her manner is warm and sensible and I found myself nodding sagely as she explained how, over six sessions, the "unconscious mind is accessed and given instructions to heal at a cellular level". The process is underpinned with flower essences and a cassette of "positive affirmations". The actual process was prosaic enough: sitting on Smith's cream leather

sofa, I shut my eyes and, to the accompaniment of ephemeral music, I listened as she told me that I was becoming ever more relaxed. Then, reading from a script (whose pages crackled as they were turned), she issued an elaborate set of instructions, some of which were a bit advanced. ("Spin your throat chakra in a clockwise direction." Eh?)

Later I had to apologise various bits of me in encouraging terms: "Say after me," said Smith, "my beloved pineal gland..." Oh dear. Oh, all right. The result, Smith said, would be that "the helixes in your cells are increasing". Then the tape stopped. I opened my eyes and was given a cassette of affirmation ("I like myself. I approve of myself") and a bottle of Eternal Youth flower essence.

I listened to my tape, and dosed myself with Eternal

Youth. For all I know my helixes were multiplying nicely, but I still felt cross and tired when I went to see Elizabeth Gibaud at the Hale Clinic. The Hale was opened in 1988 by the Prince of Wales at 7 Park Crescent, a cream-stucco building in a grand Nash terrace. Inside, the atmosphere is hospital-like, with leaflets on every complementary therapy imaginable. I was to have a facial analysis with Gibaud, whose specialities include weight loss and gain, eating disorders, mood swings, premature ageing, alcohol addiction and cystitis. When young, she had suffered from respiratory and back problems, which she overcame by change of diet and lifestyle, going on to work as an actress in, among other things, the *Carry On* films, before becoming a full-time therapist.

This slight, middle-aged woman with a power bob fixed me with a piercing stare and reeled off defects: sinus problems (true), premature ageing (undeniable), a candida infection (not that I know of), I began to think it a miracle I could stagger about at all. She began on my diet, about which I tend to be smug: no processed food, lots of vegetables, olive oil. She was up-palled: "You eat two full meals a day and do nothing to justify such consumption."

What about the daily two-mile trek to school, the rickety weekly ride, the darling about that mothers do? She was unimpressed. A thorough medical inquest followed, which revealed the fact that I am soon to have an operation (for something not very serious).

Then the verdict: two weeks on a strict detox diet and I would be bouncing with health. But I must stick to the diet (breakfast: porridge made with water, and as much cucumber as I fancied; lunch: green leaves, no oil; dinner: baked potato, lean grilled meat or non-oily fish; water). I was to take a detoxifying supplement, calcium, vitamin B, evening primrose oil and two homeopathic remedies.

I had hardly opened the front door before the telephone rang. It was Gibaud, offering support. Her faith in

her regimen is messianic, her follow-up assiduous. Over the next two weeks I was monitored and encouraged.

She has had encouraging results with serious disorders, including cancer. She believed my medical problem could be solved without recourse to surgery. Would I consider postponing the operation? I declined, wondering if it was safe to put myself under the knife after two or three weeks on such a low diet. Absolutely, said Gibaud. In a couple of weeks my immune system would be on top form.

She faxed me testimonials from clients who had benefited from her care, and rang me with news of a young woman who had had cancer since 1988 and had shown, in nine weeks in her care, a real improvement. After two days on the diet my weight dropped to below 8st. I pressed on with the oatmeal and cucumber, but the walk to school had become an ordeal. And I didn't know what to do with my evenings now that I wasn't preparing and consuming dinner.

After a week I had a persistent headache. I had arranged to go riding but felt too limp to control a horse. This is absurd, said an internal voice. Gibaud had warned me about this and I knew what I should do: ring and let her deal with the voice. Instead I made a mug of sergeant-major's tea, stiff with sugar, and swallowed it with slices of toast and Marmite. Ten minutes later I pulled on my riding boots, with a confused sense of having let Gibaud down and a stronger pang of regret: I'll never know what might have happened had my will been stronger, and my tolerance for oatmeal and greenery just a bit higher.

● *The Balance Clinic: kinesiology from £65 per session, reiki from £55 (no charge for a half-hour preliminary consultation), 0171-565 0333; Serena Smith: Rejuvenation programme (six sessions over three months) £270, 0171-431 6153; Elizabeth Gibaud, The Hale Clinic, first appointment £70, then £50, 0171-431 0156.*

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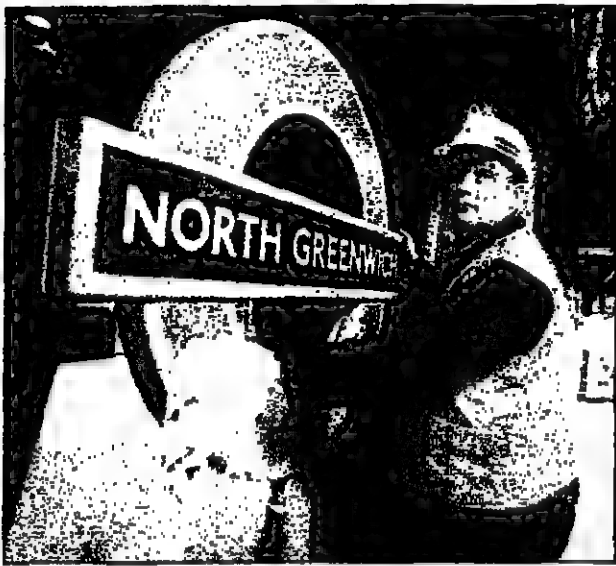


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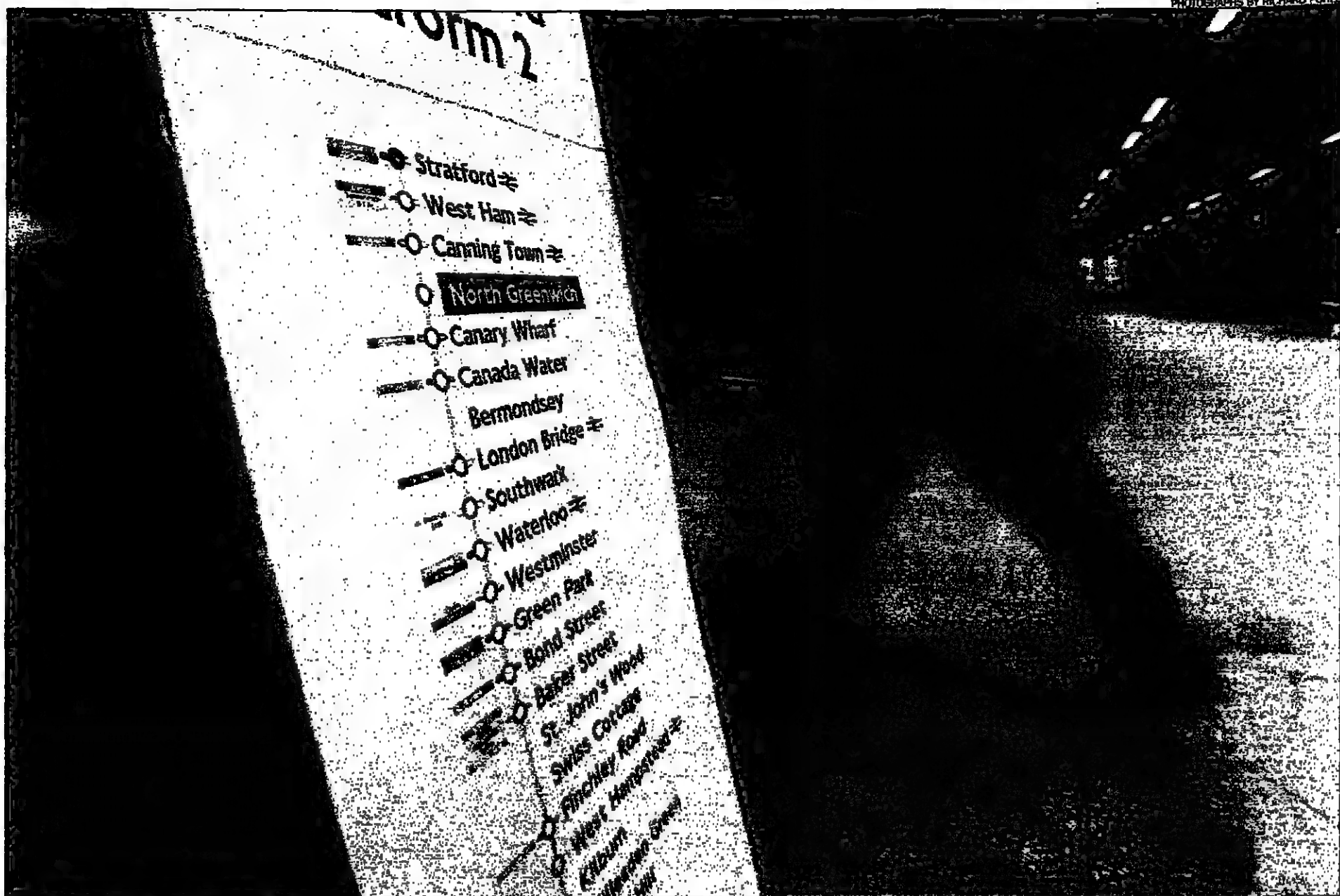


Sights at the end of the tunnel

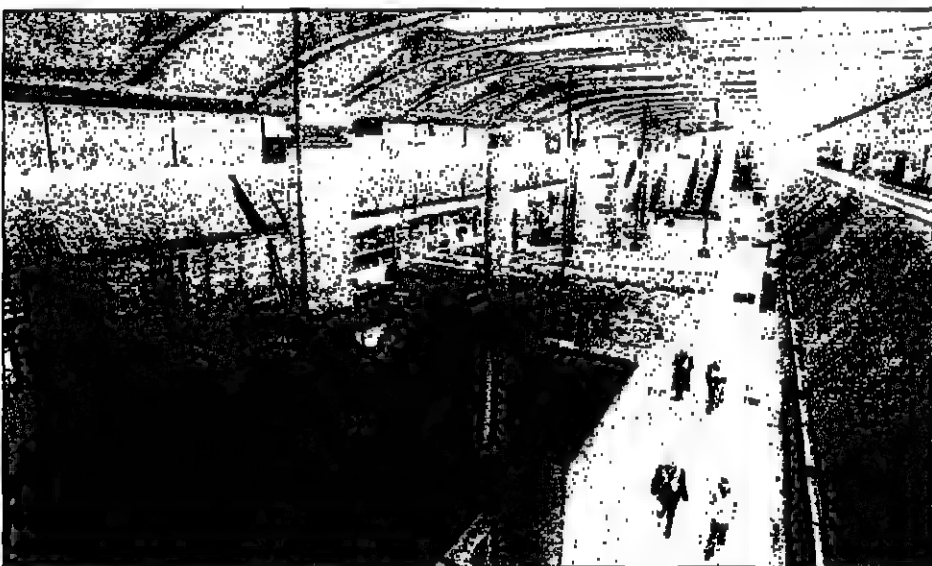
When it finally opens, the new Jubilee Line extension will be a showcase for Britain's finest architects, says Marcus Binney



Above: Chris Wilkinson's Stratford depot, with new trains



Waiting to be mounted on the wall, a chart at North Greenwich (above) lists the new Jubilee Line stations. Each has been commissioned from a different architect by Roland Paoletti



Lobby of Foster's Canary Wharf station, which will handle 22,000 passengers an hour

The new Jubilee Line stations are likely to be the biggest architectural sensation of their kind since the underground palaces of the Moscow Metro were built to Stalin's lavish specification. But while Moscow is a glittering retro

world of marble and chandeliers, London Underground's 11 new Jubilee stations — leading like a necklace towards the Millennium Dome — are airy and dramatically modern. Credit for this stupendous and imaginative act of patronage goes largely to Roland Paoletti, the architect-in-chief for the Jubilee Line extension, who came to London fresh from building the impressive new Metro in Hong Kong. Paoletti's achievement is to bring architects into an underground world that had hitherto been exclusively the domain of the civil engineer.

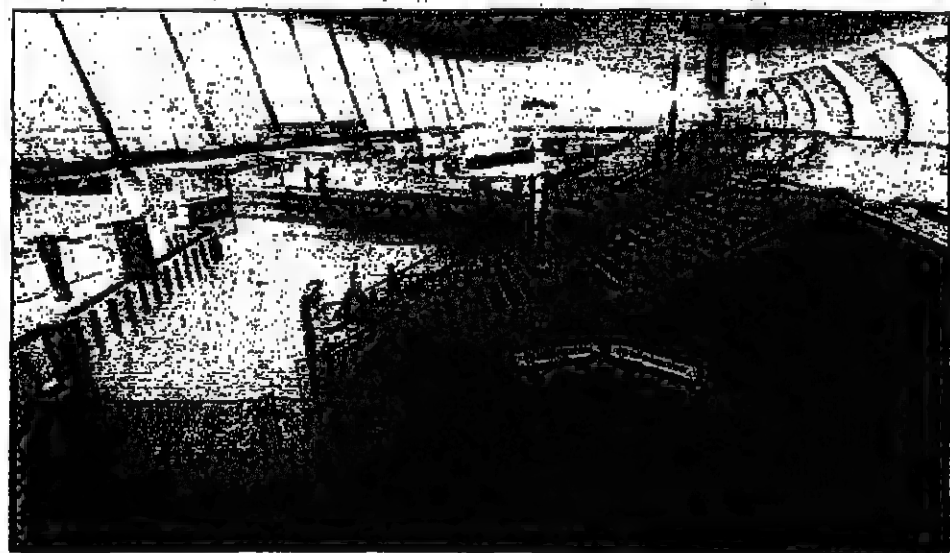
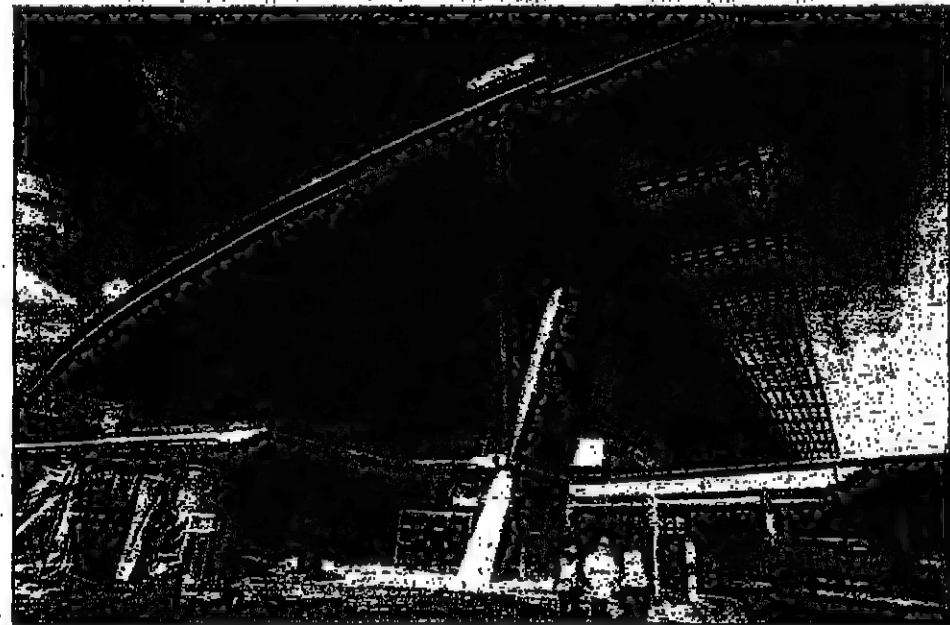
The rumour has gone round that the new Jubilee stations are like cathedrals. Not surprisingly (given the £2.9 billion cost of the extension) Paoletti is defensive here. But he fairly points out that the largest stations are cut-and-cover trenches and that filling in the hole above the platform would have been at least as expensive as leaving it as a void.

Most deep stations on the Tube are a maze of tunnels where you lose all sense of direction. No longer. Paoletti's architects have achieved wonders in contriving generous, logically planned concourses below ground in areas which are usually cramped and confused by the vast quantity of unseen equipment that has to be incorporated. He has sought out architects whose work contains a strong sense of engineering construction. This made Norman Foster an obvious choice, and also Michael Hopkins, who believes intensely that a building's structure should always be on show (and was awarded the prize commission for the new Westminster station).

Paoletti was making these choices in 1990, in the depths of the property recession, when architects were in desperate straits. In these circumstances he considered it morally indefensible to ask one architect to take charge of the project and create a family of stations as Foster did at Bilbao (or Harry Weese in the Washington DC metro). He chose Will Alsop before he got his great commission in Mar-



Will Alsop's North Greenwich station (left); Chris Wilkinson's Stratford station with huge oversailing roof (above, right); and its forecourt (below, right)



'These architects achieve wonders in contriving generous and logically planned concourses'

While Foster's architecture is all simplicity and clarity, Will Alsop, in glorious contrast, makes the design and display of every piece of equipment at North Greenwich into an event, whether they are tractor ducts, canopies or service stairs connecting to machinery rooms suspended in space. "It's an architecture of parts," Alsop says. "I am fascinated with the idea of looking up through space and not knowing quite where it ends."

To achieve the maximum platform area, he places his columns in pairs slanting in opposite directions to carry the roof. Deep blues dominate, blue mosaics on the columns and a wall of back-lit glass that is the exact tint of the traditional blue light outside a police station. Here, as at all the new stations, glass screens along the platform prevent passengers falling on the track, with sliding doors that open in sync with the train's. After the Jubilee Line has crossed beneath the Thames for the fourth time, it emerges at ground level at Stratford, a big interchange with the Central Line, the North London Line and trains to East Anglia. For this, Chris Wilkinson has designed an engineering *tour de force* using steel as expressively as Gustave Eiffel. The huge oversailing roof is supported on sickle-shaped steel beams that shoot out to form a canopy on the other side.

Wilkinson has made his name with what he calls super-sheds, and appropriately he has designed the vast service depot for Jubilee trains at Stratford. Inside, five elevated lines allow engineers to walk under trains to inspect the undercarriages, while special jacks enable neighbouring trains to be lifted up bodily four carriages at a time, with three further tracks for cleaning rolling stock.

Repeated delays to the Jubilee Line extension have created a climate of cynicism, while smart new trains in red, white and blue are already making practice runs beneath the Dome. The official line now is that trains will start running between Stratford and North Greenwich in the late spring, continuing all the way to Waterloo in the late summer, with the final link to Westminster and Green Park opening in the autumn. When and if that happens, a one-day Travelcard will buy not only a fast route across the capital, but a tour of some spectacular new British architecture.

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Cage stumbles into snuff and nonsense

The real outrage of the puerile thriller *8mm* is that anyone other than adults should be able to see it, writes Giles Whittell

I must have been a depressed weekend for Nicolas Cage and Joel Schumacher. First they will have read, or at least heard about, the reviews for *8mm*, which Schumacher directed and Cage starred in. Reviews like: "A movie that will baffle and disgust you in one disconcerting experience" (*The Washington Post*). And: "There are some films whose existence makes the world a worse place to live, and this is one of them" (*Los Angeles Times*). Then, with any luck, they will have begun to realise that on this occasion the critics have a point.

This is a dull, prurient and pernicious film. Stylish trailers for *8mm* had been running for months before its American release on Friday, and thriller junkies had every reason to look forward to it. The title had echoes of guns and syringes as well as the narrow-gauge film to which it actually refers, and the sleek-faced Cage has earned a reputation for delivering solid action satisfaction as well as quirky comedy. (One thinks of *Raising Arizona*, but also, secretly, of *Con Air* and *The Rock*.) In the event, Cage looks as if he's on Valium throughout, and the film, besides being oddly plotless for a thriller, reeks of the arrogance of studios and stars.

Cage plays Tom Wells, a well-dressed, well-spoken private investigator summoned to a spooky Pennsylvania mansion by the widow of a recently deceased tycoon. She is worried to have found in her late husband's safe an old roll of celluloid on which a terrified teenage girl appears to be killed by a man in a black leather mask, with a machete and gallons of blood. Wells's mission is to find out if the killing really is for real, and it really does not seem so.

He is on the trail of the makers of a snuff movie, a uniquely gruesome pornographic sub-genre that plagues hoodlums in the film, not mention in real life, believe it or not, in urban legend. Wells learns the truth is otherwise, which messes

with his mind and his marriage and gets him into mortal danger in a Los Angeles underworld that Schumacher has spiced, in a rare flash of imagination, with a Marraleski soundtrack.

Even the best line in *8mm* is not particularly good. As Wells, in research mode, buys up \$70-worth of hardcore porn in a Hollywood adult entertainment dungeon, the checkout clerk cheerfully asks: "Sir, could I interest you in a battery-operated vagina?" The clerk is played



by Joaquin Phoenix, brother of the deceased River, who by *8mm*'s standards is a wry, grimy, leather-trousered breath of fresh air. Otherwise the dialogue is extraordinarily lame and the look of the film so relentlessly dark that its darkness ceases to have meaning.

Schumacher may be trying to redeem himself in the eyes of his peers after the garish infantilism of *Batman and Robin*, or he may be exorcising tawdry demons of his own. A former methamphetamine addict, he has spoken candidly of shooting up five times a day in his youth and of being "one of the most promiscuous people on the planet".

He may even know more than the rest of us about real snuff movies, and be anxious to alert the world to their evil before it spreads. If so, his film is all the more miserable, because it has the grim distinction of taking on an unspeakable atrocity and failing to make us mind about it.

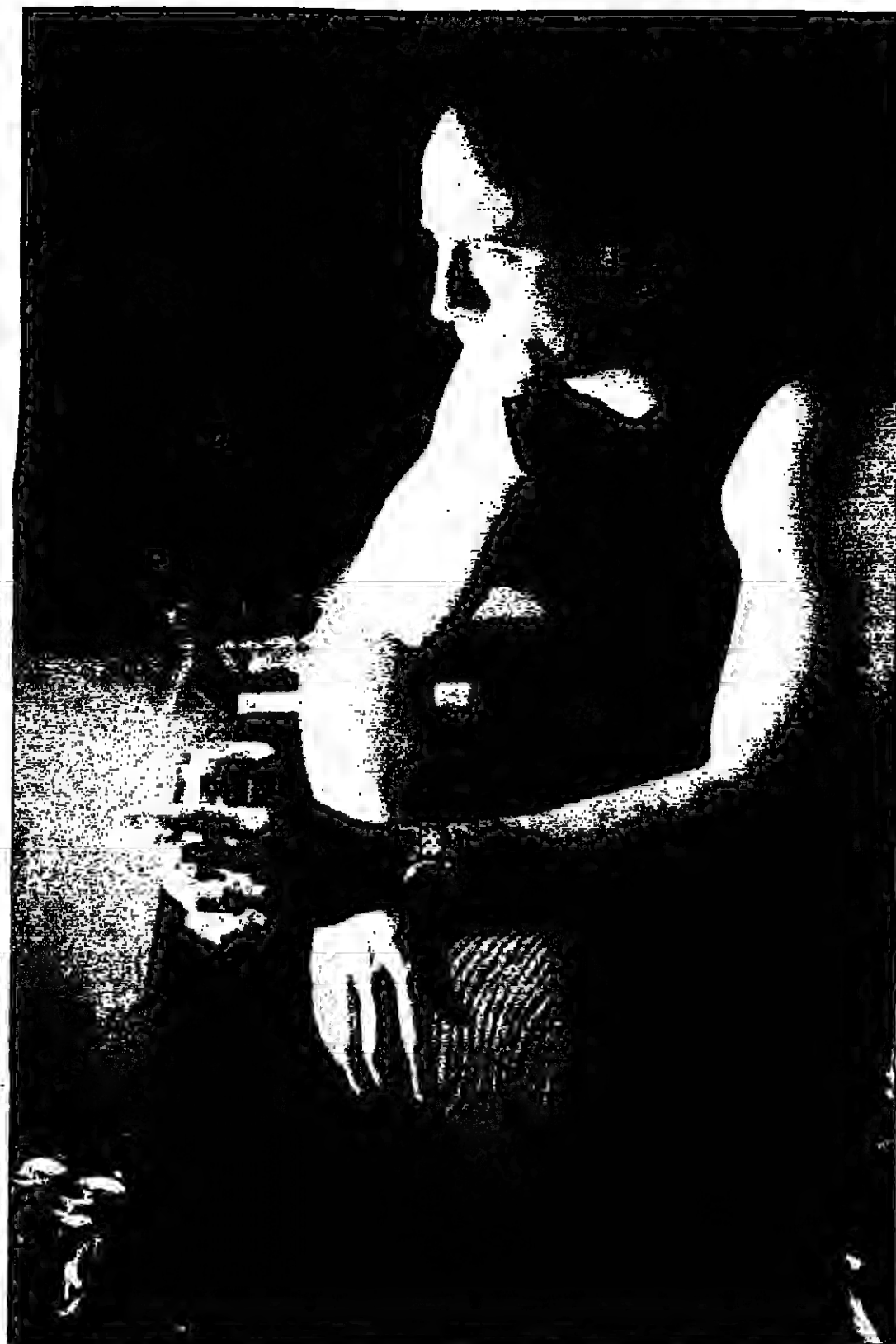
Could this be why the Motion Picture Association of America did not give *8mm* an NC-17 rating — a commercial kiss of death that bars admission to non-adults and crushed

Todd Solondz's vastly more sophisticated *Happiness* last year? Perhaps. But a furious Kenneth Turan, critic of *The Los Angeles Times*, thinks the decision has more to do with the might of Sony Pictures next to the relatively puny MPAA, whose costs the studios help to pay. "The ratings board has become so complicit with the major studios that it can't see the forest for the trees," Turan writes. "It no longer has the stomach to insist that a film that graphically investigates the dehumanising, ultra-violent world of snuff films ought to have an NC-17 placed on it no matter what tips and tricks the studio coyly agrees to make."

There were no such controversies over *The Other Sister*, which came second among new releases at the box office and could not have offered a more extreme contrast to *8mm* in form, content or entertainment value. This poignant confection was directed by Garry Marshall who, like Schumacher, has a reputation for pleasing audiences more than critics, although he goes about it in a rather different way.

In 1989 he sugar-coated a dark, trendy script about a prostitute hired by a businessman for a week and turned it into *Pretty Woman*, one of the most profitable live-action films in history. Marshall likes jokes, schmaltz and, above all, weddings. His next film, Julia Roberts' reunion with Richard Gere in *Runaway Bride*, has five of them. *The Other Sister* has just two.

Both feature Diane Keaton in one of the least sympathetic roles of her career as a buttoned-up San Francisco society mother who first marries off her prettiest daughter in high style, and then looks on as her mentally handicapped daughter gets married whether Mum likes it or not. Juliette Lewis, she of *Cape Fear* and *Natural Born Killers*, plays the other sister of the title — her first big part in three years and one that should ensure her resurrection after a well-publicised struggle with drugs.



Nicolas Cage in *8mm*, a film which takes on an unspeakable atrocity and fails to make us mind about it

US WEEKEND BOX-OFFICE TAKINGS

1	(1) <i>8mm</i> (Columbia)	\$14.5m
2	(2) <i>Payback</i> (Paramount)	\$6.9m/\$57.1m
3	(3) <i>The Other Sister</i> (Touchstone)	\$6.7m
4	(4) <i>Message in a Bottle</i> (Warner)	\$6.4m/\$32.1m
5	(5) <i>My Favorite Martian</i> (Disney)	\$5.2m/\$19.8m
6	(6) <i>October Sky</i> (Universal)	\$5m/\$5.6m
7	(7) <i>Shakespeare in Love</i> (Miramax)	\$4.4m/\$54.1m
8	(8) <i>Bliss From the Past</i> (New Line)	\$3.7m/\$16.5m
9	(9) <i>Sue's All That</i> (Miramax)	\$3.6m/\$16.4m
10	(10) <i>200 Cigarettes</i> (Paramount)	\$3.2m

● First amount is estimated weekend takings, Feb 26-28. Second amount is total takings to Feb 23. Figure in brackets indicates last week's position

BUILDING A LIBRARY

A guide to the best classical recordings in conjunction with BBC Radio 3

MAHLER'S SYMPHONY NO 5

Reviewed by David Mellar
Our starting point must be a fragile and heart-warming piece of musical history, Mengelberg's 1926 Concertgebouw recording of the famous, some might even say notorious, Adagio. In his hands this movement, lasting just over seven minutes, is not the tear-stained, death-laden thing that some interpreters since Visconti's *Death in Venice* have made it. Bernard Haitink with the Berlin Philharmonic takes twice as long, and becomes totally beamed on an ocean of marshmallow.

Bruno Walter knew Mahler well, and attended the premiere of the Symphony in Cologne in 1904. His 1947 performance with the New York Philharmonic takes only 61 minutes as against Haitink's 78, and is indispensable for serious Mahlerians. Recordings of this symphony in the 1970s and 1980s tend towards elephantiasis, but in the 1990s the pendulum has swung back. Claudio Abbado in his second recording with the Berliners in 1993 has completely rethought his interpretation of the Adagio, now taking only nine minutes as against 12 in his 1980 Chicago recording. Overall Abbado is outstanding, the overall performance on DG a marvellous blend of structural integrity and warmth.

Another splendid recent recording comes from Riccardo Chailly and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra on Decca, though a slight chilliness in the opening movements robs it of top spot. Barbirolli's 1968 EMI recording is rich, ripe and irreplaceable. High marks also to Tennstedt's 1988 live Festival Hall performance, and Mackerras with the RLPO, also on EMI, is a fine bargain.

But it is Leonard Bernstein with the Vienna Philharmonic captured live in Frankfurt in 1987 that takes the palm. It is long — 75 minutes — and the Adagio is riddled with gloom, but Bernstein's complete mastery of Mahler's idiom makes this performance irresistible (DG 423 608-2 £15.99).

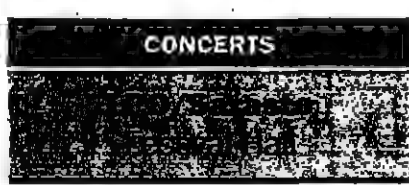
● To order the recommended recording, with free delivery, please send a cheque payable to The Times Music Shop to FREEPOST, SC0851, Forbes, 11-30 OBR or phone 0344-023-893; e-mail: music@the-times.co.uk

● New Saturday on Radio 3 (11am): Schumann's Kreisleriana

Letting us hear his body talk

If a player somehow lost the beat in mid-performance, Jukka-Pekka Saraste's conducting would not provide much of a lifeline. The arms gyrate or glide over the podium. The body wriggles. Is the man from the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra learning to fly, cleaning a windscreen or reaching for a book on a top shelf? No, he is conducting Beethoven's *Eroica*.

Despite Saraste's amusing if ungainly display, the London Philharmonic did more than just keep together. The massive *Allegro con brio* was bouncy and taut, crescendos surging enough to suggest the shock the work must have given audiences in 1805. The second movement, the Funeral March, found a satisfying bal-



ance between pomp, sombre grief and martial display. The trio section over, the music's anguish became dramatically amplified when one of the violinists was taken ill and was carried off.

The performance continued in good health: horns refulgent in the scherzo, ebullient radiance in the finale, apart from one lurching rallentando. This was not, finally, an *Eroica* to lift the roof but it

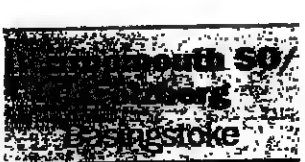
was an honest, workmanlike tour round a musical monument.

Before the interval the soprano Rita Culais sang the finale from Strauss's final opera *Capriccio*. This was not how she had intended spending the evening, but Cheryl Studer, the advertised soloist, had become indisposed with a few hours to spare. Culais bravely came to the rescue.

Also in this unhappy first half, the Festival Hall's deconstructing acoustic killed off any opulence in the opera's string sextet, and in the orchestral interlude Saraste's gyrating arms could not stop an unmagical solo horn dampening Strauss's effusions. It was Beethoven's night.

GEOFF BROWN

In full measure



but even by his own standards this was something special.

Conducting from memory, Kreizberg took risks but showed real command of the work's structure. His opening of the Funeral March was daringly dark, measured rather than restless, but he also caught the vehemence of its stormy episodes. He continued this train of

thought into the second movement, turbulent except for its nostalgic asides, building with conviction and control. Steering the symphony from its despairing opening to final blaze of affirmation, without giving the game away too soon, he maintained this emotional ambiguity in the Scherzo. He allowed the great theme of the Adagio to unfold naturally, moulding the details, without milking it. The finale had sweep, but the triumphant close still came as a surprise.

JOHN ALLISON

The Photographs of J.G. Ponting



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■ OPERA

Terfel's Aussie triumph

ARTS

■ DANCE

Verdict on Spring Loaded

Set for a royal liaison

DANCE: Royal Ballet choreographer Michael Corder is on a spectacular roll, Allen Robertson reports

He has just plucked the juiciest plum off the tree. The Royal Ballet has invited Michael Corder to choreograph the first new full-length ballet to be danced by the company when it moves back into its renovated home at Covent Garden.

A staging of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, it will be performed to a commissioned score by Richard Rodney Bennett. Despite a career that spans 25 years and includes some 40 ballets, this will be the first time that Corder, 43, has worked with a commissioned score. "My entire inspiration for choreography — emotionally, rhythmically, stylistically, structurally — comes from the music I choose. Music has always been my canvas. I use it to find my colours and my textures."

He has wanted to stage this 18th-century drama for nearly a decade now. "Ever since I first had the idea, I have been trying to find the right composer. I have listened to Russian, American, French, even German music, trying to find the right style. Then I stumbled across a piece by Richard."

"I liked his music immediately. He is wonderfully rhythmic and he is not afraid to use melody. And, even though he is now based in New York, he is English to boot. I had never

even met Richard when I proposed the idea," adds Corder. "But he said yes immediately." In this case immediately means February 2002. In between there is much to keep Corder busy. His career is on a roll. English National Ballet recently revived his *Cinderella*, which won both the Olivier and Evening Standard awards when it was first staged three years ago.

Romeo and Juliet, his other full-length Prokofiev staging, will arrive in London in November when the Norwegian National Ballet performs at Sadler's Wells. And tonight his latest piece, *Masquerade*, will be seen as part of the Royal Ballet's *Dance Bites* tour in Bath. Choreographed to the orchestral suite from Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*, it features costumes by Anthony Ward.

"It is called *Masquerade* because I wanted to make it clear right from the start that this is not *Pulcinella*. There isn't a narrative. I want you to see it as a suite of dances." So Corder has sidelined Stravinsky's arch commedia dell'arte scenario. "I like the atmosphere and the smell of those commedia stories, but *Masquerade* is a musical piece coming from a musical standpoint."

"For me," Corder insists, "dance is always about dancing. If you can say something

Michael Corder rehearsing his new ballet *Masquerade* with members of the Royal Ballet: "I've got more and more Classical as I've got older"

better by writing an opera or a play or doing a film or a musical, then do that. I am interested in pieces that relate to dancing."

"If it doesn't sound too old-fashioned, I do believe dancing is spiritual. It is the beauty and the generosity of the soul expressed through movement. I try to distil that essence in every ballet I do."

Corder has been a part of the Royal Ballet family ever

since he started ballet classes there as a child. His first choreographic commission for Covent Garden, *L'Invitation au voyage*, was nominated for an Olivier Award and in the mid-1980s he went on to collaborate with the distinguished painters Patrick Caulfield and Helen Frankenthaler.

But, following a run-in with Frankenthaler's lawyers over costume designs that Corder

wanted replaced, his professional standing collapsed. "The whole thing blew up in all our faces. I was not treated properly, but I survived."

Now he has come full circle and is back with the Royal Ballet for the first time in 14 years. "That whole mess is finished. You don't forget, but it's important to move on."

Corder is impressed by the current atmosphere at the Royal. "It's a hive of activity at the moment. In my own rehearsals, it had all been bumping along the bottom but is now on the way up. Returning to Covent Garden is enormously exciting, a catalyst for

a new beginning for the company. Finally, everyone can see that there is light at the end of the tunnel."

Masquerade stars three of the Royal's top ballerinas: Viviana Durante, Miyako Yoshida and Leanne Benjamin. "It has been a joy to work with such fabulous dancers. Their technical expertise, their musicality and their ability to know how to work is wonderful."

"I've got more and more Classical as I've got older," Corder adds, when asked to assess his style. "I hope I am upholding a tradition, that I am part of a lineage. That is what I am aspiring to."

"Yes, the Classical language is always changing, but there is a lineage. You need those

building blocks. I am not interested in being cutting edge because this year's cutting edge is often next year's passé. Of course I understand that Classical ballet is a branch of show-business, but I really think it's important not to dumb down. Any layman can be touched by the passion, clarity, form and structure are communicated."

"It is not just about me trying to have a terrific career," he adds. "I believe passionately in the uplifting qualities of Classical dance, and in having a good time in the theatre."

● *Dance Bites* is at the Theatre Royal, Bath, tonight; a second *Dance Bites* tour is at the Civic Theatre, Darlington, tonight. Tel: 0171-213 9206 for full tour details

Secrets and sulphur

London's Spring Loaded festival of contemporary dance turned the spotlight on two emerging British choreographers last week. Charles Linehan, who last year won the £17,000 Jerwood Award for Young Choreographers, makes a quiet statement with his gentle and understated dances. Wayne McGregor, on the other hand, makes a big noise in his mission to prove that dance and technology are great partners.

Linehan's modest programme (at The Place) was a triple bill of secretive and inward-looking pieces. *Number Stations*, a danced semaphore set to short-wave recordings of various intelligence agencies, is a curiosity — and mildly interesting — while *The Secret*, a quartet set to cheesy Hawaiian melodies, is a demure little number that plays with the audience by constantly diverting attention from itself.

The most ambitious item on the bill was *Preludes and Fugues*, set to a piano score by Shostakovich (played live by Marko Martin). A dance for three, it amounts to chore-

graphic small talk, its argument the product of a rather languid intellect.

McGregor's offering, *Sulphur 16*, is a hyperactive 70 minutes of strange and slippery dances for his Random Dance Company (at the Queen Elizabeth Hall) that are as volatile as volcanoes. His 16 daring fragments of dance (each just over four minutes) throw out the oddest shapes and most illogical phrases.

Sulphur 16 is the second (the first was *The Millennium*) in a trilogy devoted to exploring the dance potential of new technologies. McGregor's choreography has been devised with the aid of the computer-animation programme *Poser* and with digital video material which was played in reverse "to give an alternative view of the architecture of the movement". DVD, thermal-imaging cameras and God knows what else went into the soup. Whatever its genesis, the choreography does seem to reach parts of the body other choreographers don't.

McGregor's movement language is restless and unresolved: the dancers give the impression of people tormented by insects. The constant paradoxes in the writing have the effect of disembodiment the dancers and as you watch them jab, stab and annoy the performing space you do wonder at the why of it all.

At 70 minutes, the frenzy of body-shocking currents begins to read like an exercise in choreography. The music (credit: Zoviet France) — a more or less constant drone — is a dead zone which only increases the monotony.

Yet McGregor is amazingly inventive and energetic, and he is clearly on to something with this technology business. All he needs now is to harness his enthusiasm for all things digital to a more cohesive dance statement.

DEBRA CRAINE

A knight to remember

AT THIS stage of his career Bryn Terfel can apparently do no wrong. Every role he undertakes adds another cobble to his international reputation. Taking on Falstaff for the first time in an unfamiliar house, away from his usual haunts of New York and central Europe, the British baritone was greeted with something close to rapture by a first-night audience that included a sizeable number of well-wishers from his native North Wales.

Although this is his first Falstaff, there was nothing timid or half-hearted about his interpretation of a role he can develop at will. He was not afraid to sing it like the young man he is, and his characterisation of the lecherous knight will obviously deepen with the years. But this will do for starters.

British audiences do not have long to wait to judge for themselves. A new production of *Falstaff*, conducted by Bernard Haitink, will reopen the Royal Opera House in December, when Terfel will be again rolled out of the laundry basket into the Thames. And if the production is as handsome and clear-sighted as the one directed by Simon Phillips, which is now in its fourth year, it will be a happy event.

Falstaff is not an opera that lends itself to absurd representation. There are the merry wives, the lovers, Fenton and Nannetta, beneath the stairs, assorted buffoons and the Lord of Misrule himself. All the director has to do is draw the humour that arises naturally, and make sure everybody runs up in Windsor Park on the stroke of midnight. Apart from some coarse acting in the Garter Inn, when the comic exchanges of Bardolph and Pistol, Falstaff's followers, were anything but funny, Phillips kept a tight rein on the action.

Yvonne Kenny made a splendidly manipulative Alice Ford and Irene Wahg was a winning Mistress Quickly. In the pit, Simone Young conducted this glittering score with both body and weightlessness, ex-

celling in a memorable third act of gossamer delights. Phillips found his best touches for the Windsor scenes with a set that could also do service for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. But it was Terfel's night.

Despite his bulk, Terfel's Falstaff has a spring-heeled lightness of touch that suggests the former ducal page-boy could have had a courtly bearing if he had spent less time on the sauce. The knight "in full summer bloom" appears, in these hands, to be just that in the first three acts, and it is to Terfel's credit that the autumnal tints stop short of November. His voice, rich, deep, and flexible, is an magnificent instrument. As a vocal treat and an exercise in stagecraft, it was a knockout and it is coming to London later this year. Lucky old London.

MICHAEL HENDERSON

Goethe turns to lead

In just another six months Goethe will be 250 years old and, if the ensuing celebrations run true to form, we shall be treated to exhibitions of Goethe in His Time, Goethe in Our Time, Goethe for All Time, some of which will be exciting and some not. But already, one thing is certain. No tribute will be as boringly futile as this dire production by Michael Chase's Mask Studio, based upon a fairytale Goethe wrote at a time when alchemy interested him.

My ears wax over when earnest folk seek to interest me in the gobbledygook of *severatio, conjunctio, cognatio* and the other alchemical processes, climaxing in the "Royal Marriage", when yummy transformations are supposed to occur and love unites all. But disbelief can always be suspended if the theatrical context is right.

The original Goethe I have seen only in a numbing 19th-century translation, but an adaptation could perhaps be made, in Yeatsian Nob-play mode, of the story's mysterious elements: the river crossed by the ferryman who

must be paid, the snake that swallows the gold, the exiled prince, the lily whose touch kills, the temple rising from the waters, the wonderful bridge. Suitably distilled for the stage, we might see all this as an image of personal growth, acceptance of opposites and the like. It might even look pretty.

But what Chase and his writer, Michael Burton, have chosen to do, with fatal consequences, is interlard the Goethe episodes with scenes of their own. The idea is to bring relevance and show that alchemical principles can inspire us in our modern world. Thus we have a group of travellers stranded at a neglected railway station waiting for the delayed midnight train. "The train won't come till you're ready for it," observes the porter, smiling under his woolly cap. And indeed, on

seven occasions their 30-hour wait is interrupted by interruptions of Goethe, where the businessman becomes a moping prince, the prostitute turns into the lily, the lady clinging to her porcelain figures becomes the green snake and so weiter.

The clanking banality of the writing in these modern scenes will be hard to convey. Just one example — the porcelain lady (named Beatrice, oh dear) remarks: "Holes appear in life and I am beckoned by nothingness." There are masks, as you would expect from the company's name, which will not persuade sceptics of the value of this genre. Chase's idea of the importance of movement seems primitive — swaying in unison, that sort of thing.

I liked the Ferryman's rowing, and the names of the lovers, Anna Wynnyczak and Mahatma van der Sloot. I liked the ridiculous to have their notes (D, G and so on) pencilled across the front of them. I liked nothing else at all.

JEREMY KINGSTON

AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES

WAKING NED EXCLUSIVE PREVIEWS



● Complimentary tickets ● 76 venues

This week *The Times* has teamed up with 20th Century Fox to offer readers the chance to see an exclusive preview screening of *Waking Ned* on Sunday morning, March 14 (exact times will be on the ticket). The film, a raucous modern fairy tale, was a surprise hit at the Cannes Film Festival and won rave reviews when it opened in America at Christmas. Inspired by a true story, *Waking Ned* follows the comic exploits of two friends as they stumble into a lottery scam of hilarious proportions.

For a FREE ticket, which admits two, collect five differently numbered tokens, attach them to the completed voucher right and present them at the cinema box office of your choice, from those listed below. Tickets will be issued on a first-come first-served basis between March 4 and 13. *Waking Ned* opens nationwide on March 19.

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The Tories, on a hiding to nothing

Labour's last landslide was only a start, predicts Gerald Kaufman

Straw in the doghouse (say some). Cook and Lloyd in trouble with the Foreign Affairs Select Committee. Fears about GM foods cut Labour's opinion poll lead. Yet that lead is still far higher than on election day in May 1997. And Tony Blair's phenomenal popularity endures, while that of William Hague explores previously unknown depths.

"Ah," say the wisecracks (as they have been saying since Blair succeeded as Labour leader in 1994), "it can't last." Mid-term blues are sure to set in, the Tories will recover support and, even if Labour wins the next election, it will be with a reduced majority.

Really? Why? We are in mid-term already, with a general election quite likely the year after next. Although the Government still seems brand new, it has been in office for a year and ten months. Yet, although some of its ratings have been dented by recent controversies, its predominance over the Conservatives continues, with the Liberal Democrats as almost irrelevant also-rans. All the objective evidence points to a landslide even greater than that of 1997.

In 1997 I told Tony Blair he would obtain at least 400 Labour MPs, and he did not believe me, expecting a majority of about 50. Yet not only the opinion polls but canvassing evidence pointed to an enormous Labour win. Sir John Goss believed me sufficiently to put money on his Labour opponent gaining the Henderson seat he had held for 27 years; he won his bet.

So inbred was the Labour Party's culture of defeat that even senior members could not bring themselves to credit the possibility of the historic win they went on to achieve. Similarly, despite the 1997 landslide and the continuing popularity of the Government, some ministers gaze at me as if I were mad when I assure them that the party will gain seats at the next election.

Yet the likelihood of such a victory is obvious. For anyone with eyes to see, the entire British political landscape has been transformed. From 1945 to 1997, inclusive, that landscape was easily discernible. On the left was Labour. On the right were the Tories. In between were the Liberals, or whatever they happened to be calling themselves at the time, bestowing their fickle favours.

Now, however, the Liberal Democrats have become the left-wing party, taking over from the discredited and impotent hard-Left remnant inside the Parliamentary Labour Party the advocacy of increased social spending and increased taxes to pay for it. If that prodigious attitude were done insufficient to make alliances with the Tories impossible, the Lib Dems' extreme pro-Europeanism makes any association with the Eurosceptic Conservative leadership inconceivable.

The Lib Dems are now, despite their increased Commons representation, a Parliamentary appendage of new Labour. One Lib Dem MP complained to me: "The La-

bour Party are taking us for a ride." I replied: "Yes, but it's the only ride you've got."

As for the Conservatives, they have turned themselves into a fringe party, weaker even than Labour was after its 1983 longest-suicide-note debacle. Even after that worst electoral setback in its history, Labour's continued existence was necessary, since there were millions of voters who would have been unrepresented without it; the poor, the deprived, the unemployed, the ethnic minorities. There is, on the other hand, no significant element in society which would be unrepresented if the Tories shut up shop, especially since we now have a very different sort of Labour Party.

Under Margaret Thatcher the Tories were an exclusive party — motto, "Those who are not with us are against us" — who triumphed because their opponents were divided. Under Tony Blair, Labour is inclusive, with the motto: "Those who are not against us may be with us." New Labour is not the centre party, but the centre-of-gravity party, with Blair daily adjusting the tiller to maintain his Government's dominance of British politics, with the Tories and Liberals filling the spaces he does not choose to occupy.

Moreover, those spaces are liable to contract. Labour's 1997 landslide, though overwhelming, was incomplete. Because of the residue of the extremism and division that pervaded Labour until Blair took over, many voters feared that the old Labour Party wolf lurked beneath the new Labour carapace. Two years of new Labour Government have banished that phantom.

Many 1997 Conservatives may also vote for Blair next time because he, unlike Hague, is leaving the door to a single European currency open. A recent MORI poll showed that one third of Conservative voters would support a pro-euro Conservative Party; such a party is liable to siphon off Tory votes — and maybe seats — in this year's European elections conducted on a proportional representation system. In a first-past-the-post general election, Tory Eurosceptics might turn to Labour. Furthermore, a substantial proportion of 1997's 46 Lib Dem voters were elected partly on Labour tactical votes. Voters in some of those constituencies might decide to have real new Labour rather than its surrogate.

The scene, then, is set for a huge Labour victory at the next election. If, this spring, the Tories make headway in the local, Welsh, Scottish and even European elections, we shall be told that the Conservatives have made a comeback. Labour made big gains in the local and European elections in the 1980s, but was trounced in Parliamentary elections. Ambitious Tory MPs should look to alternatives to the ministerial careers they will never have.

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No laughing matter

In an age of sneering, Post-Modernist cynicism, we have forgotten the joke

A chilly gales rake the land and the Home Secretary sweeps back to chastise us. I offer two cheerful pieces of news on the nation's moral health. One is that the first edition of *The Beano*, a limp relic from 1938, has sold after a frenzied auction for the record sum of £6,200, complete with free Whoopie Mask and a cast of characters including Big Ego the Ostrich, Fing the Elastic Man, Hank the Slapdash Sheriff and Uncle Windbag.

A sentimental tear springs to the eye. We shall not look upon their like again! Or perhaps, come to think of it, the tear is brought on by the fact that we look upon their like rather too often. For what is that weekly contest across the dispatch boxes, if not a duel between Fing the Elastic Man and the bald-pated ostrich figure of Big Ego himself?

Meanwhile Uncle Windbag jets home from the Riviera to lecture us all on our failures of citizenship, and his sidekick, Hank the Slapdash Sheriff — Shriek! Gnash! Aargh! — manages to put a dummy security camera on the most sensitive site in London. *The Beano* got there first, as ever.

The other encouraging cultural news is from a conference at the National Film Theatre: the *Carry On* films are having a youth revival. Dr Andrew Medhurst, of Sussex University, informs us that students no longer despise such classics as *Carry On Camping*, but embrace them. "In Blair's Britain," he says, "we're always being told to be decent upstanding citizens. It's no surprise that people turn to something that says 'So that. Let's get drunk and have a bit of a grope and a laugh'."

Well, he may be right, although drinking and groping have not exactly vanished from the TV schedules. Myself, I offer an opposing analysis. I think we are nostalgic for the *Carry On* films for the same reason that we treasure *The Beano*: we are bored with freedom, and nostalgic for rules and for a time when it really was fun to send up authority and respectability, because both could be taken comfortably for granted. As the century ends in an atmosphere of sneering, debunking and joyless sexual mayhem, we are homesick for lost boundaries.

It is no fun being Dennis the Menace if there is no furious Dad to chase you with a slipper. The contemplation of foul-mouthed

ladettes may make us yearn to hear Barbara Windsor squeak "Blimey!" again; the age of angst, chippy professional superwomen might well bring on a sneaking nostalgia for the majestic confidence of Matron Hattie Jacques, bearing down on her victim with an giant cocoa. There is nothing like a background of stability and dullness to make jokes shine.

Look how moist-eyed Britain became upon the death of dear Derek Nimmo, the hopeless Rev Nootle of *All Gas and Gaiters*: we were reminded of the sheer fun to be had from mocking the clergy in the days when it was brave. Then, the BBC trembled: today Dawn French can portray a man-crazy Vicar of Dibley with hardly a frisson (but fewer laughs). Remember when cinemas rocked with wicked laughter at James Robertson Justice playing the consultant Sir Lancelot Spratt, or Alastair Sim impersonating a headmistress. Where are the awe-some figures of authority now? Spitting Images, every one, assumed to be discredited before they even began; endlessly renewable fodder for the dry, mirthless, Post-Modernist ironies of the Angus Deayton age.

We have lost the true pleasures of baiting sacred cows because the only sacred cows now are PC ideologies, whose ascendancy can be challenged only by being nasty about the vulnerable. The beauty of mocking authority, from *The Beano* to *Set Billo*, was that authority could take it: the best jokes stood up for fallible, naughty humanity, rather than doing it down. Remember the radio classic *Round the Horne*, in which a notionally strait-laced Britain revelled in the miming innuendo of Julian and Sandy and their perennial cry of "Ooh, in 'nee bold!" That heady sense of baffling the censor is

lost today, when Channel 4 seems hardly even bold in showing the seduction of a 15-year-old boy by an older man, and even teenagers groan "Oh no, not another transsexual prostitute" as they zap away from the BBC to a multimedial punch-up on Jerry Springer.

There is nothing to be daring about, now. My favourite birthday present is an original copy of the BBC Variety Programme's Policy Guide for 1948, including the famous: *Absolutely ban upon Jokes about the following: Lavatories; Effluvia; Immorality of any kind. Suggestive reference to: Honey-moon couples; Chambermaids; Fig leaves; Prostitution; Ladies underwear, e.g. winter draws on; Animal habits, e.g. rabbits; Lodgers; Commercial travellers.*

It adds that "the vulgar use of such words as 'barker' must also be avoided" and bans Bible jokes, with the mysterious exception of those about Noah. Against that background it is easy to see why a golden age of comedy bloomed in the 1950s.

The best analysis comes from George Orwell, writing in 1942 about the postcards of Donald McGill. He contrasts them with American and continental cartoons and notes their moral core: "Whereas in papers like *Esquire* or *La Vie Parisienne*, the imaginary background of the jokes is always promiscuity, the utter breakdown of all standards, the background of the McGill postcard is marriage. The four leading jokes are nakedness, illegitimate babies, old maids and newly married couples, none of which would seem funny in a really dissolute or even 'sophisticated' society."

He cites the joke of a young husband getting out of bed the day after the wedding, with inset the picture of the front doorstep bearing four days' newspapers and milk, and observes: "Its implication —

and this is just the implication that *Esquire* or *The New Yorker* would avoid at all costs — is that marriage is something profoundly exciting and important, the biggest event in the average human being's life. So also with jokes about nagging wives and tyrannous mothers-in-law. They do at least imply a stable society in which marriage is indissoluble and family loyalty taken for granted."

McGill and the rest, Orwell said, represented a safety-valve, a necessary raspberry blown at inspirational "speeches of Prime Ministers, solidarity songs of public schools and left-wing political parties, national anthems, Temperance tracts, papal encyclicals and sermons against gambling and contraception". Yet in that wartime year, he saw them against a background of an essentially solid community: "Nevertheless the high sentiments always win in the end: leaders who offer blood, toil, tears and sweat always get more out of their followers than those who offer safety and a good time. When it comes to the pinch, human beings are heroic."

"Women face childhood and the scrubbing brush, revolutionaries keep their mouths shut in the torture chamber, battleships go down with their guns still firing when their decks are awash. It is only that the other element in man, the lazy, cowardly, debt-balking adulterer who is inside all of us, can never be suppressed altogether and needs a hearing occasionally..." That 1940s world and its values are now quite gone.

Forty-seven years on, we speak more often of our right to be well-treated than of our duty to be good, still less heroic. Maybe the lazy, grumbling, promiscuous, promise-breaking, debunking creature has broken too far out. Maybe our nostalgia for the comedy of the sober and dourful mid-century years recognises that. The innocence of the jokes brings back the days when Joe Englishman was still on his best behaviour, still met adversity with "naust'n't grumble" and "worse things happen at sea", and needed McGill and *The Beano* and Frankie Howerd and Sid James to blow his raspberries for him. Today everything is a grumble or a raspberry. It gets less funny by the day.

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Libby Purves

'The Internet is not all listed buildings and photos of roses and Prince William — 90 per cent of Internet traffic is devoted to pornography'

Richard Tyrrell

The cyber future is on us and if you are not online by now you may as well be dead. If you have no e-mail address you're a walking piece of history, as out of date as papyrus. The launch of the Pentium III is here, technology so advanced it makes jet planes look like carthorses. The latest generation of microchip processors is already causing a huge fall in the price of existing PCs. The entire national heritage — 360,000 listed buildings — is to go on the Internet. And, best of all, computers are to be free. Compaq has announced that it is seriously considering the idea: Free-PC is giving away 10,000 computers to anyone willing to use them for ten hours a week.

The Internet is simply the most powerful force in society. Business? Do it on the Web. Shares? Buy them on the Web. Books? Read them on the Web. Films?

Watch them on the Web. Clip your toenails? Do it in front of a webcam on your PC, so others can share the experience.

Few indeed are the Luddite voices speaking out against the Internet. I know of a few old novelists and poets — all over 50 — who still write their books with pen and ink extracts can usually be read on the Web. There are many elderly people who don't know what Microsoft Explorer is. That's OK. There are plenty of Web tutorials.

But perhaps it is time to remind ourselves that all is not right with the Internet. The technology is fine, but is the public mature enough for 100 per cent access to what amounts to a free-for-all? Aren't there social issues surrounding the content of the Internet? Do we know what its effects will be?

Let us remember that the Internet is not all listed buildings

and photos of roses and Prince William. According to my *Rough Guide to the Internet*, 1999 edition, 90 per cent of Internet traffic is devoted to pornography. A great many men buy PCs and use them — webcams — primarily for sexual gratification. Anyone who has logged on to the family zone of Microsoft NetMeeting, as I have, and found themselves chatting to somebody named "Hairy Hound" (who has sat for two hours in front of his PC in his underwear), will quickly recognise that the Net is the natural home of voyeurs.

It is also, far more seriously, the natural home of child pornographers and extremists. Child pornographers are clever enough to stay one step ahead of the police by setting up their

services in countries with poor law enforcement — Iran, or Russia. A favourite ruse is to attach their wares to legal porn sites by means of the serial link — that is, when you click on an icon, your PC automatically opens up a haze of other Web sites. Among these will be the bestiality, rape, or child-abuse site. Surfers foolish enough to stray into this territory — from curiosity or rebelliousness — are likely to find themselves carrying the mental scars for a long time.

Similarly, it is simply to link to pages of political hate groups. The ideas of neo-Nazis or white supremacists look comic in the cold light of day. And they would be, were it not that these people are organised, and still finding recruits. What

those recruits do is a secret only the initiated know. Yaron Swarov, who wrote a book on European neo-Nazism, described how his own initiation included being guest of honour at a snuff movie and having a gun held jokingly to his head.

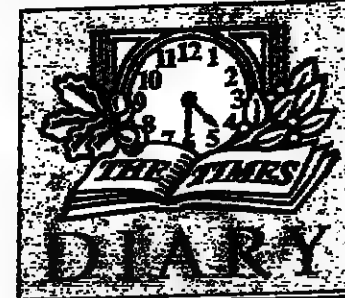
Neo-Nazis, such as the group surrounding the sinister Friedrich Bisse in Germany, are quite frank about their plans to become "respectable". To build links with established right-wing groups, to gain credibility, as the far Right has done in France, and to come out as full-blown Nazis only when the time is right. With limited resources, the surest way of spreading the word is on a free, worldwide media.

Seth Warshavsky, a 25-year-old porn millionaire, has claimed that the Internet is normalising porn. It may well normalise hate, too. It may normalise a lot of things that are not socially

desirable. It is already encouraging onanism, and rapidly ousting the popularity of phone sex. Most Web users are capable of leading routine, well-balanced lives (even if they do a bit of naughty surfing). It is the lonely, whose only outlet is their imagination, who are more at risk. In their search for the new image, the more risqué photo, one can see the fault-lines where child pornography or political extremism may find a convert.

So while the Cyber Age is still in the ascendant, let's have pause for thought. The Internet is a place of creativity but no poetry; of high ideals and low instincts. If we embrace it and praise it unquestioningly, we collude with its child abusers and haters. A great deal of work remains to be done on its dimly lit zones

comment@the-times.co.uk



The love of Mike

DIANE ABBOTT starred with Michael Portillo and played the Tory's wife in a school play, I have learnt. The lefty MP was at Harrow County Girls, while Portillo, both pictured, was at the boys' school. The production also saw a buccaneering Clive Anderson. Hitherto, Jonathan Aitken, godfather to Diane's son, was believed to be the only dashing right-winger she would let near her balcony.

"I also offered her Lady Macduff in my *Macbeth* film," says Portillo. "Sadly, the jumbles failed to raise enough finance." Some say she also played Juliet to Michael's Romeo, but she slams this as "FO smears" (she has been pestering about arms to Africa). "I did play opposite Portillo — but not as his lover."

A KUWAITI prince popped into Heathrow's duty-free for a spot of therapy recently. He spent £6,500 on 49 bottles each of cognac, gin and whisky, having them wrapped in cigarette boxes — to "ease their passage" into the dry kingdom.

EGO overload in Piccadilly, where Richard Branson's plan for a "mega-bar" has been blocked. His "giant entertainment centre" was to join Oliver Peyton's Atlantic Bar and Marco Pierre White's Titanic in the gloomy Regent Palace Hotel. Branson hoped to set up a series of private "lounges" (oh dear) but planners might be worried about the flurry of wits Peyton has issued against other caterers on the site, claiming he is solely entitled to trade there.

BATTERED ministers moan that Sir William Macpherson of Cluny has had an easy ride from the race lobby, despite his bracing immigration record. "He was the kind of judge," jokes a minister, "who would decide a case by asking 'smoking or non-smoking?' and send the blighter back on the next plane." Bunkum, I'm sure.

THE dodgy general set to rule Nigeria learnt his trade from Ken Livingstone and his GLC cronies. Olusegun Obasanjo, whose "victory" has been questioned amid church vote-rigging claims, was dums with Iillyd Harrington. Ken's deputy during his reign in London, "He helped me with the Buddhist peace pagoda in Battersea," says Iillyd. "He was strangely keen to help." I trust he did not try to teach Ken about ballot-rigging.

DONNISH scenes at Magdalen, Oxford. As smells rumbled towards dinner (to mark the opening of a new auditorium) a kerfuffle broke out over a gown between Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, Chancellor, and Lord Nell of Bladen. Finally the latter grabbed it: "It's mine! It belonged to Harold Macmillan."



LORD SALISBURY was a greater Tory PM than Disraeli, a forthcoming biography by Andrew Roberts will claim. The fashionable historian argues in an early proof that the peer was even more Machiavellian in clambering up the greasy pole. Roger Scruton agrees. "Salisbury was the most successful PM we have had because we know nothing about him," says the editor of the *Salisbury Review*. "He left the country as he had found it, the ideal politician, so be it. I admire Disraeli but he hardly left the world unnoticed." Such are the perverse criteria for being a Tory great.

SILLY claims that the BBC is in bed with Labour take a strange turn. No sooner than Lance Price leaves his slot as a Beeb toiler to help Alastair Campbell stamp out dissent, but Bill Bush, the BBC's election chief, jumps in beside them working in the Strategic Communications Unit. Most rum.

JASPER GERARD



CARE FREE

A Royal Commission of royal extravagance

Days before the general election, Tony Blair accused the Conservative Government of forcing "thousands of pensioners to sell their homes to pay for long-term care". Pensioners deserve better than Mr Blair stated. A Royal Commission was promised to recommend how the rising cost of looking after an ageing nation might be met. After over a deliberation, its 12 members could be on a way forward. Yesterday the produced proposals which, including the core problems, would submit future governments to public expenditure. Only two dissenting from these old Labour to trust the State, argued that to this complex problem lies private, not public, hands. The should on this occasion listen minority.

Of the current system are who have been prudent for old age, and whose £16,000, are not entitled to pay for care in nursing or homes. As a result, every year, pensioners have to sell their "their sense of injustice is the lottery of illness: a patient with cancer is the NHS, while nursing a patient with Alzheimer's

pathy and willingness to problems is tempered by the of doing so. Already, long the State about £7 billion a he system is changed, uish and bills will rise growing proportion of y 2031, about one in five of will be over retirement age. conundrum, the majority of nission did indeed think the ut not in the way that the intended. Its proposal that d fund the care and social ng and residential homes payers over £6 billion by

HOPE FOR NIGERIA

clear election result but a clouded future

have been accusations of ars of independence, there n a single fair or clean igeria. But despite the European and American s clear that Olusegun former military ruler, was ting winner as the next nt, even if all fraudulent nted. His victory is a rare tion in a country that has mocracy, almost no good l is seen as one of the most world. He takes office in a Herculean challenge to African equivalent of the

e up to the task. A gruff who won distinction as a ander, he has a national t goes beyond tribal allears of domination by the : of the few southerners who ountry. He is less popular in ba heartland than in other ia: that is a measure of his not to allow the old tradi partiality to cloud his appointments. Three years rucising the military have utation for decency. ale job is to keep Nigeria's air barracks and root out e abused their position. This of the clique around Sani mer military dictator, made ough the plunder of the alth and the manipulation of xchange and import regula-

BRING BACK MR CHIPS

re teachers have much to add to their profession

ke a maths teacher to work ution does not balance: in Wales some 8,000 teachers seeking work in schools: ssrooms all over Britain are pe with serious shortages of smething is not adding up ch-touted education policy. : profession has long been a riment concern. Excessive ng hours and disruptive ntributed to a steady decline l figures. Low pay leads to m. And where unruly chil- sidered a disruption on the ens. Britain's teachers have e flak. And so, in an effort to rned image of teaching, ent has pieced together a £130 age of measures intended to candidates to the profession. he cinema's "nobody forgets a er" campaign which added re, a Green Paper on the future g, published at the end of last posed "golden hellos" worth science teachers and perform- ed pay measures which would aries up from a pittance to ve rates.

st, even as government money is tempting new teachers, a jobsack- ance is paid out to thousands of

2051. Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, has wisely kicked this into the long grass of public debate. No amount of government spending is likely to satisfy the public's expectations of what the State should provide. Such an explosion in expenditure would do little to help the less well-off, whose care bills the State already covers, but might provoke a rise in demand for free care and deter people from taking out private insurance. If they want help with their living costs, elderly people will still be means-tested; so some might still need to sell their homes. Overall, the chances are that a future government would abolish such a scheme, unable to meet spiralling costs without hefty rises in taxation.

Fortunately, two members of the commission, David Lipsey and Joel Joffe, were not tempted to follow their colleagues into this high-spending nirvana. Their minority report is predicated on the more realistic notion that the State cannot — and should not — promise to pay for all the costs of long-term care. Dissent has produced some imaginative ideas. For example, they suggest a state-sponsored scheme to enable elderly people to borrow against the value of their home to fund care. Mr Lipsey proposes that no one should have to fund their care in a residential or nursing home for more than four years, making it easier for people to save or insure for their future.

Commonsense schemes like these would create new incentives for people to take care of themselves. Yet such tinkering amounts to a nudge in the direction of the private sector, where a forceful push is required. Across Europe, governments face the same dilemma of how diminishing workforces might support the growing band of elderly people in the next millennium. The Government is right to be cool towards the majority report's solution, which would help to bankrupt the nation. But the existing unfair, antiquated system is bankrupting thousands of prudent pensioners. The ball is once more back in the Government's court to think the unthinkable.

tions. They did not expect General Abdulsalam Abubakar to allow any democratic elections, still less to set in train the retribution that must now follow years of democratic and human rights abuses. Sullen and fearful, they are itching to stage a new coup. Mr Obasanjo must use all his military and moral authority to enforce his will.

The harder, longer-term job is the rebuilding of the shattered economy. Social services have collapsed, hospitals, schools and roads are crumbling, legitimate business is impossible. In one of Africa's richest countries, millions now live in poverty. Rooting out corruption is an urgent but slow job: so ingrained is the practice that few now understand how to do business or administer government cleanly. The repair of the oil industry must be a priority: but the low oil price, the environmental devastation already caused to the Delta and the sometimes well-founded suspicion against multinationals all make it harder to generate wealth from the ground.

Mr Obasanjo can count on international support: Europe and the Commonwealth should end remaining sanctions as swiftly as possible, and the rest of Africa will rally to Nigeria. Mobilising domestic support will be harder. The refusal by Olu Falae, the election loser, to accept the result is as unfortunate as it is inevitable. It could be exploited to create the very instability that would thwart the transition to civilian rule. Expectations are high — perhaps too high. Mr Obasanjo must move swiftly and sure-footedly if he is to save his country.

applicants hoping for teaching work. For mature entrants into the profession, and for those returning after a break, opportunities are surprisingly scarce. Schools find it cheaper to recruit young graduates. And older applicants may find it almost impossible to gain work at a salary commensurate with their experience.

The Government must consider ways of using earmarked funds to redress this imbalance. Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, has pointed a finger at incompetent teachers suggesting that education remains "too much a lottery" because of patchy standards of teaching. Nervous young newcomers may be a cause of such unevenness. Maturer teachers often have a presence and authority which some younger recruits lack. Not only may they command more respect, but their firm grasp of a subject can lead to an inspiring confidence in imparting their knowledge. Moreover, several of these older teachers have opted for teaching as a second career. Many bring relevant experience from the fields of business and industry into the classroom. The teaching profession has long recognised a need for this. Children need to find their lessons applicable in some way to the world outside. And while Britain's schooling system continues to resist these older recruits, it is wasting one of its most precious resources.

Schools and the Lawrence inquiry

From Professor Bernard Crick

Sir, Your leading article today is wise and forceful to argue against the Macpherson report's recommendation of an annual publication of school-by-school lists of "racist incidents" and ethnic (which is a better word) identifications of pupils excluded.

This would almost certainly be counter-productive and a measure, not of professional competence in difficult and delicate situations, but of the social, ethnic and religious composition of neighbourhoods.

However, the idea that the curriculum should be amended "in order better to reflect the needs of a diverse society" is not so out of line with the recommendations of the advisory group on The Teaching of Citizenship and Democracy in Schools that I had the honour to chair (1997-98), so long as ethnic relations are part of a broader programme of citizenship learning. We said, for instance,

... a main aim for the whole community should be to find or restore a sense of common citizenship that is secure enough to find a place for the plurality of nations, cultures and ethnic identifications and religions long found in the United Kingdom.

Many of our precise learning "targets" are relevant to this good purpose.

Yours sincerely,
BERNARD CRICK,
8a Bellevue Terrace,
Edinburgh EH7 4DT.
February 26.

From Commander Michael Saunders Watson

Sir, The Macpherson report recommends that the national curriculum should be amended "better to reflect the needs of a diverse society". When the National Curriculum History Working Group was set up in 1989 we were instructed to put British history at the core of our recommendations and, inter alia, to address the question of what history should be taught to the ethnic minorities.

In the case of the former we took account of the histories of the four countries which make up the UK, and from which as a multicultural society it draws its strength. For instance in the area of human rights, we gave weight both to the Declaration of Arbroath in Scotland and to Magna Carta in England.

In the course of our work we visited a number of schools with pupils from many ethnic backgrounds. One, I recall, included pupils speaking over 50 national languages. Their teachers were adamant that they should be taught the history of the country of their adoption. To do otherwise would, they felt, not only be impractical but divisive.

While our recommended course of history therefore focused on Britain, we did include study units relating to areas of the world from which many of these pupils originated.

Sadly, other pressures have intervened to reduce both the content and amount of history being taught in schools.

I trust, however, that the essential features of British history, based on a tolerant absorption of the many cultures of its people over time, will remain and in due course benefit from the invigorating effect which those from foreign shores bring to our islands. This must be the right way forward.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL SAUNDERS WATSON
Chairman, National Curriculum History Working Group, 1988-90,
Roxingham Castle,
Market Harborough,
Leicestershire LE16 8TH.
March 1.

From Mr Rex Walford and Ms Christine Counsell

Sir, You urge circumspection in any amendment to the national curriculum in the light of the recommendations of the Lawrence report. We agree.

Giving all young people a thorough and enlightened understanding of our nation's multicultural past and of the diversity of the world's peoples is surely the basis of future racial harmony in Britain. Our best history and geography teachers foster wide knowledge of these issues and critical engagement with them.

If the Secretary of State for Education would give as much attention to the teaching of geography and history as he does the so-called "core" subjects (especially by supporting them, rather than marginalising them, in the key years of 14 to 16, at Key Stage 4) much could be achieved in advancing both relevant knowledge and positive attitudes in a multicultural Britain.

Yours sincerely,
REX WALFORD
(Geographer),
CHRISTINE COUNSELL
(Historian),
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February 26.

Letters to the Editor that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Debate over royalties on art works

From Mr Robert J. Waterhouse

Sir, The proposed *droit de suite* tax on art sales (report, February 22; leading article, February 25) — now, thankfully, put on hold by the EU report, February 26 — would require that "art" be defined and a comprehensive system set up to monitor the sale of every "work of art", collect revenues and distribute them as appropriate. Bearing in mind that most art has little commercial value, the cost of running a Europe-wide scheme would probably be greater than the revenue collected. No doubt the taxpayer will be expected to pay for the army of inspectors, administrators and accountants who would operate the scheme, presumably from some comfortable base in continental Europe.

It would be necessary for these officials to study the wills of all artists, and wills of their beneficiaries, in order to distribute the revenue correctly — a colossal undertaking and yet another intrusion of officialdom into the lives of Europe's citizens.

There can be no logical basis for treating the descendants of artists differently from the descendants of anyone else. It would be no more foolish to extend the scheme to cover the descendants of artists' models, who receive a pittance. And what about people whose property is included, without any payment, in a landscape picture? Shouldn't they get something out of all this too, since it is the image of their property that is being sold?

Only the European Union could waste its time on such nonsense.

Yours etc,
ROBERT J. WATERHOUSE,
5 Heatherbank,
Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5RE.
February 26.

From the Chairman of the British Copyright Council

Sir, Congratulations on including, at last, the artists' side of the case for the *droit de suite* (report, February 22). This royalty is long overdue (it is not a tax — since when did taxes go direct to private individuals?) It has always been a matter of

puzzlement for those concerned about artists' earnings that the British art market apparently believes that passing 2 or 3 per cent of the resale price of a work to artists (or their heirs) will "destroy" the market, whereas the much larger commissions charged by dealers and the auctioneers (the latter to both buyers and sellers) evidently have no such effect.

The spokeswoman for the Matisse estate, quoted in your report, was spot-on in suggesting that the British trade could only be thinking of what they themselves might lose.

Yours faithfully,
GERALD DWORKIN,
Chairman, British Copyright Council,
Copyright House,
29-33 Berners Street, W1P 4AA,
February 25.

From Lord Jacobs

Sir, I wonder why our art dealers and auction houses cannot do what other business people do when faced with price competition — ie, match their competitors' prices and absorb the cost within their own price structure.

Auction houses could readily absorb, within the 10 per cent buyers' premium, a new tax of at least 2 per cent. Given the choice between lower margins or losing all their business, the former would surely be preferable.

Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY JACOBS,
9 Nottingham Terrace, NW1 4QB,
February 25.

From Mr Jonathan Gestetner

Sir, What about works of art which sell at auction for less than the artist's original selling price (which happens far more frequently than the reverse)? Would it not be as logical for the artist, or his estate, to participate in the next purchaser's loss as in his gain? Why should artists be rewarded on a "heads I win, tails you lose" basis?

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN GESTETNER,
Marlborough Rare Books Ltd,
144-146 New Bond Street, W1Y 9FD.
jg@mrbooks.co.uk
February 25.

Gulf War illness

From Mr Howard Fienberg

Sir, We would do best to look past Colonel T. H. English's call to the British Government for an inquiry on Gulf War illness (letter, February 18). I have seen no evidence that Gulf War veterans are "affected significantly more often by disorders of unknown cause". Evidence demonstrates that some Gulf War veterans are ill. Full stop.

The health studies published in January in *The Lancet* and the *British Medical Journal* simply bolster the conclusions of dozens of studies in Canada and the US — the great number of different symptoms and possible causes offer no evidence of an all-encompassing syndrome. Self-selected cases and self-reported symptoms rather than clinical diagnoses hamper most of the research that has pointed to a syndrome.

This is not to question whether or

not any veterans are ill. This is not to say that they are all suffering from psychologically-based illness, though some of them may be (and even they are still sick).

Also, the media appears to be exacerbating veterans' health more than "organophosphate exposure". A study published in last August's *American Journal of Epidemiology* showed how large increases in the reporting of symptoms by veterans corresponded to periods of intense media coverage.

It may be possible that veterans' legitimate illnesses have been somewhat obscured, but it may also be that we are, in some ways, simply scaring our veterans sick.

Yours faithfully,
HOWARD FIENBERG
(Research analyst),
313 12th Street, SE,
Washington DC 20003.
hfienberg@stats.org
February 19.

An Irish champion

From Sir Humphry Wakefield

Sir, In your handsome obituary for the 19th Lord Dunsany (February 19) you write that he "probably lived most of his life in the shadow of his famous father Edward, the dramatist and short-story writer". He also lived "in the shadow of" (or did he bask in the light of?) his elegant mother, Beatrice, daughter of the Earl of Jersey.

His father's shade did not soften the desert for the then Randal Plunkett's astonishing wartime crossing of the Quattara Depression, which you mention. He achieved this feat to the applause of friend and foe alike, leading to safety men of that crack Indian Cavalry regiment, the Guides. Paternally shadowless, too, were the polo fields where he was a

champion player amongst those high-goal champions of all time in colourful Kiplingesque prewar India. There, Randal, as dashing ADC to the Viceroy and an army sabre champion, fought a famous duel with a cobra.

In your columns, long ago, Bernard Levin claimed that Randal's father, the 18th Lord, had written the finest first chapter in any "English" novel, in *The Curse of the Wise Woman*. Had Randal been 17th and not 19th Lord, maybe the 18th Lord — a dramatist and short-story writer — would have been inspired to, at very least, a most dashing biography.

Yours faithfully,
HUMPHRY WAKEFIELD,
Chillingham Castle,
Chillingham,
Northumberland NE66 5NU.
February 24.

Scottish parliament

From Mr Bob Cuddihy

Sir, You report (Scottish editions, February 24) that the BBC has decided against a dedicated digital/cable television feed providing full, live coverage of the Scottish parliament, in favour of selective coverage. Whom is the BBC serving in Scotland? Are services provided with a so-called metropolitan view in mind or for the Scottish licence-payers? If it is for the former then the latter can only feel cheated.

Who can say whether or not viewers would be "bored to tears", but, in any case, who says democracy was designed to provide "good" television? Will the proceedings of the Scottish parliament be any less boring than what passes for debate at Westminster? And how much relevance will Westminster's deliberations have on the everyday lives of the Scottish people?

Why not reverse the BBC's plans and show the complete proceedings of the Scottish parliament to viewers in Scotland, with proceedings at Westminster restricted to highlights?

Yours faithfully,
BOB CUDDIHY,
143 Constitution Street,
Edinburgh EH6 7AD.

Genes and Genesis

From the Reverend David Gynes

Sir, Just think what Monsanto and new Labour could achieve if they had the support of God (letter, February 25).

Yours faithfully,
DAVID J. GYNES,
33 Neptune Road,
Fareham, Hampshire PO15 6SW,
February 25.

From Mr Peter R. Davies

Sir, When genetically modified people reach the gates of heaven I hope and believe that Peter will let us through, on the ground that it wasn't our fault.

Yours sincerely,
PETER R. DAVIES,
Ashurst Piece, Cross Road,
Tadworth, Surrey KT20 5ST.

From Dr Michael Handford

Sir, My thought is: God had the expertise and chose not to use it.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HANDFORD,
Millstream, The High Street,
Ramsbury, Wiltshire SN8 2PA,
February 25.

A bishop's place 'is in the Lords'

From Mr John Wainwright

Sir, The general secretary of the National Secular Society, Mr K. Porteous Wood (letter, February 22), thinks there should be no bishops in a reformed House of Lords. I feel that the Government has acted in the public interest by supporting the retention of bishops for the transitional period and I am encouraged that it is looking for ways to increase representation from other Churches and religious traditions.

Parliament has to consider many ethical issues, such as the family, human sexuality, bio-ethics, the environment, education and overseas aid, which go well beyond the boundaries of political parties and on which religious leaders can often make important contributions. These are likely to increase rather than diminish.

Mr Porteous Wood thinks the presence of religious leaders in the Lords is undemocratic, but by the same criterion why should the secular values he espouses have what I consider to be a disproportionate influence on public opinion — and who has elected those members of the media who often seem to trivialise religious issues and unfairly stereotype religious people? At least having some official religious representatives in the Lords will, albeit in a very small way, help to give a fairer balance. As a professed democrat, Mr Porteous Woods should be in favour of this.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN WAINWRIGHT
(Methodist lay preacher),
48 Borough Way, Putters Bar,
Hertfordshire EN6 3HB.
john.wainwright@btreserve.co.uk
February 23.

From Mr N. J. Inkley

Sir, Mr Porteous Wood makes an unjustified assumption which I believe invalidates his argument. He says that "retaining the English bishops [in the Lords] disadvantages the third of the population who do not believe". It might advantage Anglicans, but it need not disadvantage anyone. The presence of good men and true can benefit all.

Yours,
NEIL INKLEY,
6 Knot Lane, Walton-le-Dale,
Preston, Lancashire PR5 4BQ,
February 22.

Houdini's film releases

From Professor Emeritus Edwin A. Dawes

Sir, *The Man from Beyond*, which you report (February 25) as being Harry Houdini's "one attempt to break into films", was not the only Houdini feature film (and has, in fact, been available on video in the US for several years). He starred with the serial, *The Master Mystery* (notable for bringing the first robot to the screen), and ended (in 1923) with *Haldane of the Secret Service*.

His last two films were produced by his own Houdini's Motion Picture Corporation, a venture in which he lost some \$500,000, for reasons which will be readily apparent when the restored *The Man from Beyond* is screened at this month's Bradford Film Festival.

Sadly, Houdini's talents as a great showman and escapologist did not translate to the screen and, despite a fascinating Niagara Falls episode in *The Man from Beyond*, biographer Kenneth Silverman's observation that Houdini's acting in the film provided little more animation when his character was alive than when frozen in the ice tells all.

Yours faithfully,
EDWIN A. DAWES
(Historian, The Magic Circle),
Dane Hill, 393 Beverley Road,
Anlaby, East Yorkshire HU10 7BQ,
March 1.

Names and numbers

From Mr E. W. Lighton

Sir, Mr Harry Tate (letter, February 22; see also letters, February 22 and 25) tells us of the policy of the Australian State of Victoria, which allows drivers a wide personal choice of numberplate, and eventually announced, as I was, by the formation "OOO AAH" seen in Canberra last September.

A small notice in a side window contained the legend: "It may be your daughter on the back seat."

Yours etc,
E. W. LIGHTON,
11 Ryebank Avenue,
Crewe CW1 3SW,
a131755@btinternet.co.uk
February 27.

From Mr Alan Dale

Sir, Suppose that the system of vehicle registration had always been such that the owner's name or initial were compulsorily incorporated into the numberplate. Imagine the status to be gained by, and the cost of, beating the system and acquiring an entirely anonymous plate consisting of meaningless letters and numbers.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN DALE,
Tangle Farm, Tangley,
Andover, Hampshire SP11 0RZ,
February 27.

OBITUARIES

AIR COMMODORE FREDERICK RAINSFORD



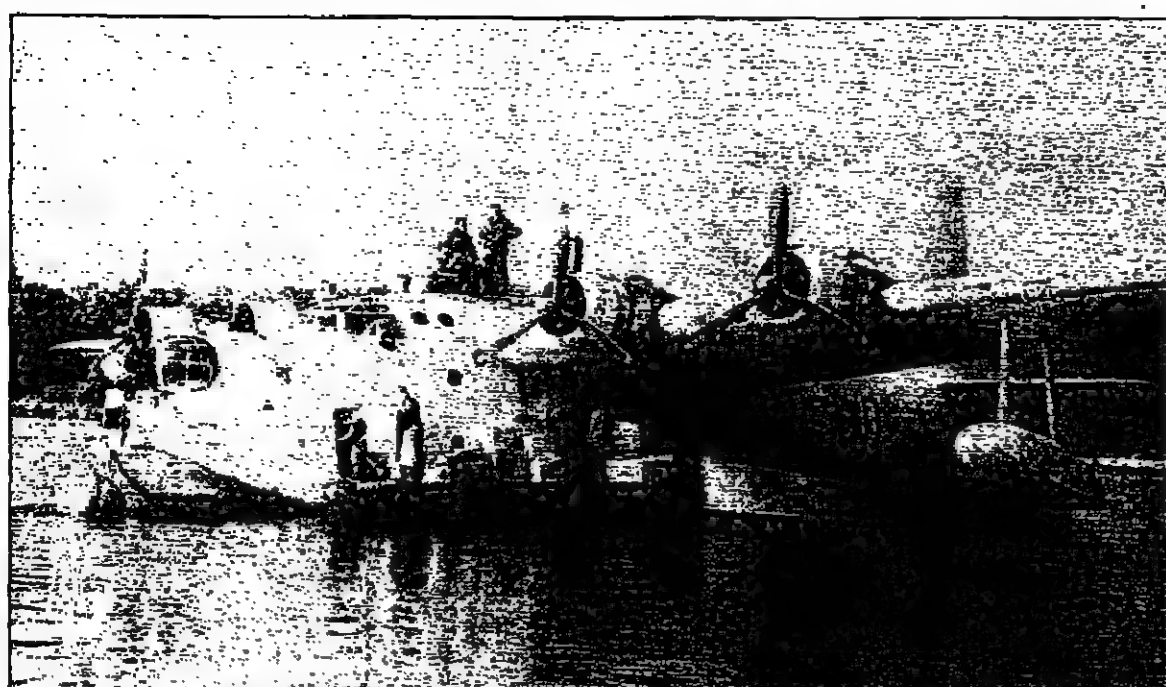
Air Commodore Frederick Rainsford, CBE, DFC, bomber pilot and diplomat, died on February 13 aged 89. He was born on December 12, 1909.

After spending part of the war endeavouring to destroy Berlin as a bomber pilot, Frederick Rainsford found himself playing a central role in preventing the inhabitants of the beleaguered city from starving in 1948-49. The remarkable Berlin Airlift came about when, in June 1948, the Soviet Union reneged on the postwar Four Power Agreement for the administration of the city and blockaded all land routes into it. Soviet Berlin lay so deep inside the Soviet zone of occupation, the intention — to lay exclusive hands on Germany's capital — was evident.

Rainsford, as senior staff officer in the Air Ministry, played a pivotal role in organising the British end of what became a substantially Anglo-American air bridge into Berlin. It was an operation which from small beginnings fed Berliners, heated their homes and kept the city's industries going for almost a year, until the Russians relented and normal routes to the city were opened again. Implementation of the alternative at first suggested by the Americans — an armed land convoy — would almost certainly have led to a head-on clash with the Russians and possibly to a third world war.

Frederick Fitzpatrick Rainsford was an Irishman, born the son of a Royal Irish Constabulary officer at Castlebar, Co Mayo. He was educated at Campbell College, where he went as a pupil farmer to Kenya. In the early 1930s he returned to Northern Ireland, where in 1935 he took a degree in agriculture at Queen's University, Belfast. While at university he learnt to fly with an RAF Special Reserve Squadron and was given a commission in 1936. For the next few years he gained experience in bombers.

When war broke out he was serving with 215 Squadron in Cambridgeshire and was thereafter on training duties for more than a year. His war really began when he was sent, early in 1941,



A Sunderland flying boat delivers precious supplies to Lake Havel during the Berlin Airlift

to North Africa to take command of No 148, a Wellington squadron based on the Suez Canal.

As part of what was styled the Heavy Bomber Force (though the Wellington was really only a medium bomber) 148 regularly raided the harbour of Italian-occupied Benghazi, in what was known as the "Mail Run". The knack, as Rainsford later said, was to hit the harbour without damaging "Mae West", as the protruberant twin domes of the city's cathedral were known. When the Germans poured down through Greece, 148 Squadron added targets in the islands and on the Greek mainland to its list, and it also attacked the Vichy French in Lebanon.

Back in England, after further spells of training and a staff course, Rainsford was posted early in 1943 to the staff of 3 Group in Cambridgeshire, and spent the next six months planning raids on the Ruhr and Nuremberg. In May that year he was given command of No 115, a Lancaster Squadron, and was soon in the thick of the Battle of the Ruhr which was then in full swing as Bomber Command tried to take the war to Germany's industrial heartland.

During a raid on Krefeld he had the disconcerting experience of having a 4,000lb bomb "hang up" on him, resisting the most desperate attempts of all his crewmen in turn to chop it clear of the bomb bay with the aircraft's axe. Rainsford gave his crew the option of bailing out over England rather than participate in an attempted landing with such a lethal cargo, but to a man they chose to stay. While all on board, and in the control tower at 115's base at East Wretham, Norfolk, held their breath, Rainsford pulled off one of his most slick touchdowns. In July

1943 he and his squadron took part in the Battle of Hamburg, witnessing the firestorm which devastated the city. In the following month he and 115 were in the attack which wrecked the V2 testing site at Peenemünde on the Baltic Sea. He was awarded his DFC that autumn.

After this second tour of operations Rainsford spent the rest of the war on the staff and in training posts. In 1946 he briefly became a civil servant, but he was shortly afterwards offered a permanent commission which he gladly accepted.

One of his most important jobs in the Air Transport Department, to which he was posted in 1947 as deputy director of operations, was to organise what was known as the Trunk Route to Singapore. In those days before long-range jet transport shrank it to less than 12 hours, the distance represented a five-day haul, and the maintenance of effective facilities along the route was vital for the supply and, in emergency, the reinforcement of bases in the Far East. The experience of honing such an operation to perfection was to stand Rainsford in good stead when a supply crisis of a very different sort was to burst on him closer to home.

When the Berlin crisis broke he was No 2 to Air Commodore David Aitcherley, the Director of Air Support and Transport Operations. But Aitcherley was almost immediately posted away to command the Central Fighter Establishment, and Rainsford assumed sole responsibility for the British effort.

At first it looked a hopeless task. But with a motley collection of aircraft both military and civil pressed into service, the daily tonnage leapt up: from 400

tons a day on July 3, 1948, to 750 tons a day by July 7, and so on up to an eventual total of 4,000 tons a day. An aircraft took off or landed at RAF Gatow in the British sector of Berlin every 90 seconds, carrying food, fuel and light machinery, and these were supplemented by Sunderland flying boats, which came in from Hamburg and put down on Lake Havel, bringing cargoes of coal.

Rainsford had to battle not only with logistics, but with the Treasury, which cavilled at the expense of chartering vast numbers of civil aircraft to supplement the RAF's transports. Rainsford told his officials that the avoidance of a world war was his first priority and that the cost of that would have to be worked out afterwards. Indeed, the British and Americans were prepared for an indefinite operation. And then, suddenly, in the summer of 1949 it was all over. The Russians gave up and lifted the blockade as precipitately as they had imposed it. Rainsford was appointed CBE for the part he had played.

His subsequent postings included a spell as Air Attaché at the Athens Embassy, 1957-60, and he retired from the RAF in 1962. But a new career in diplomacy awaited him, first with the Commonwealth Relations Service and, in the latter he had a period as Deputy Consul General in New York.

In 1972 Rainsford finally retired to the Kentish Weald where he had previously bought a house. An autobiography, *Memoirs of an Accidental Airman*, appeared in 1986.

Rainsford is survived by his second wife Audrey and by their daughter and son, and by two daughters of an earlier marriage which was dissolved.

KING OPOKU WARE II OF ASHANTI

King Opoaku Ware II of Ashanti, died in Kumasi, Ashanti, Ghana, on February 25 aged 79. He was born on November 30, 1919.



Loyalty to his people without disturbing the relationship with Accra: King Opoaku Ware II at a Grand Durbar, 1991

The 15th Asantehene, as the King of Ashanti is known, Opoaku Ware II ruled an ancient kingdom that is now an administrative region of Ghana. He did so in a manner which maintained the dignity of his position and people without disturbing the delicate relationship between Ashanti and the central government in Accra. A London-trained barrister, he had succeeded to the Golden Stool, as the Ashanti throne is styled, in 1970 on the death of King Prempeh II, his second cousin, who had ruled from 1931.

The genealogy of the Kings of Ashanti is a complex one, succession being matrilineal from the first Asantehene, King Osei Tutu, who came to the throne some time around 1675. The Ashanti Kingdom reached the zenith of its power in the 19th century when it covered an area of West Africa corresponding to much of modern Ghana as well as of neighbouring Burkina Faso, Togo and the Ivory Coast.

The Ashanti were in conflict with colonial Britain in the late 19th century and in 1896 British troops occupied the ancient capital, Kumasi, and deposed King Prempeh I. The Asantehene and many of his officials were sent into exile to the Seychelles. But the British were to find — as the governments of an independent Ghana have also experienced — that the cultural prestige of the Ashanti simply cannot be ignored. The British authorities were forced to relent and in 1925 Prempeh was brought back to Kumasi and reinstated as King, ruling until his death in 1933.

As Matthew Poku, the future King Opoaku Ware II read for the Bar at Lincoln's Inn. He served in a number of capacities in the old colony of Gold Coast: he was a surveyor in the RAF and became the first president of the African Civil Aviation Commission. The Gold Coast became independent as Ghana in 1947, the first of Britain's sub-Saharan African colonies to do so. But its first Prime Minister (and subsequently President), Kwame Nkrumah, was de-

posed for abuses of power in 1966 and Poku served the successor regime as Commissioner for Communications. In 1970 he was appointed Ghana's Ambassador to Italy, but before he could take up his post King Prempeh II died and he was chosen 15th Asantehene from among the dead King's relations on his mother's side. He was "enstooled" at Kumasi on July 6, 1970.

The new Asantehene continued the tradition of striking a careful balance between visible allegiance to the Ghanaian state and his responsibility to the Ashanti people. For its part the state was careful not to offend this most visible and glamorous ethnic group which, although it constitutes only 30 per cent of Ghana's population, is the focus of widespread interest outside Africa for its cultural vitality.

Indeed, although he has no executive power in Ghana, the Asantehene is treated almost as a head of state in his own right. All heads of state visiting Ghana pay their respects in Kumasi and on one of his first trips abroad, a visit to Britain, King Opoaku Ware II was received at Buckingham Palace. He was fortunate in his

wife, Lady Victoria, a member of an influential Ashanti family and an adroit diplomat in her own right. She was always at his side on foreign trips and fully understood the need to balance the preservation of Ashanti tradition with the opening up of the monarchy to the modern world. She was active in arranging the spectacular Ashanti exhibition at the Museum of Mankind in London in 1981. When the exhibition subsequently transferred to New York, members of the American black community thronged the city's streets to catch a glimpse of the Asantehene, who had gone to the United States for the occasion.

Though by 1995 terminally ill with cancer, Victoria also played a prominent role in Opoaku Ware's silver jubilee that year. In a celebration dazzling in its colour and light, chiefs in traditional robes, weighed down by gold and jewellery, came with their entourages to pay their respects to the leader of the Ashanti race.

Lady Victoria died in 1996. King Opoaku Ware II is survived by a son and two daughters.

PERSONAL COLUMN

DEATHS

1. 3-Hugh, suddenly on 28th February. Devoted husband of the late Mary and beloved Father of Oonagh, Hugh, Shanna and Fiona, adored and loving Grandfather of his 14 Grandchildren. Deeply mourned by all who knew him. Requiem Mass at St William of York Roman Catholic Church, Ecclesall Road, Sheffield, on Friday 5th March at 10am. No flowers please but donations for CAFOD may be sent to CAFOD, Abbey Lane, Sheffield S6 6CB. Requiem in 6th.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

TANNER - Professor P.A. (Tony), a Memorial Service for Professor Tony Tanner will be held in King's College Chapel, Cambridge at 2.30 pm on Saturday, 6th March 1999.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

BOOTH - Roland Gordon, died 3rd March 1998. Beloved husband of Nancy, father of Emma and Claire. Remembered today and always.

BIRTHDAYS

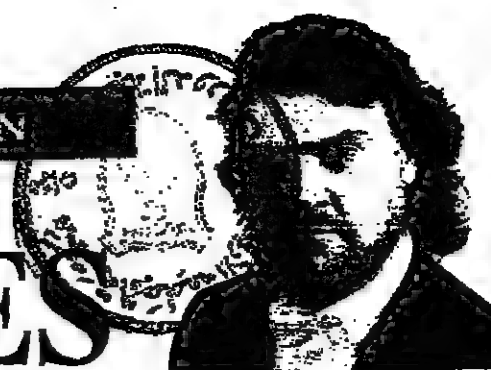
YAMA Hager Birthday, you have been married in 1970, I never thought you would be so young again. All the best from your friends and family.

SERVICES

PLUMBER PARTNERS National Plumbing Agency, 17 York St, London EC3A 3DP. Tel: 01753 619999.

WANTED

FOR HIRE: 1998 Honda Civic, 1.8i, 16v, 100,000 miles, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

TUESDAY MARCH 2 1999

Market slides as Bank rate cut fears grow

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE STOCK market slumped yesterday as fears of a halt to the Bank of England's recent rate-cutting spree and a possible rate rise in the United States forced investors to the sidelines.

The pound, however, made ground against both the dollar and the euro after new data suggested the UK economy is on course for a soft landing.

January consumer credit growth was stronger than expected, while a rise in the February Purchasing Managers' Index

bolstered hopes that the manufacturing sector is beginning to turn the corner.

Consumer credit showed robust growth of £1.38 billion, broadly in line with the recovery in high street sales that month, compared with £670 million in December.

The UK Purchasing Managers' Index crept higher although it still points to an overall contraction in output for the 11th consecutive month. The improvement was led by the export sector, with export order books recording smallest deterioration since December 1997.

The City interpreted the data as evidence the Bank of England may leave rates on

hold after the conclusion of its monthly monetary policy meeting which begins today. However, the decision is still finely balanced and the MPC may ultimately be swayed by

IN BUSINESS is the new weekly section launched in The Times today to give a voice to small and medium-sized firms with big ambitions. — pages 34, 35

an expected Treasury briefing on the Government's Budget arithmetic. The FTSE 100 index of leading shares

closed down 114.2 points at 6,060.9 in slow trade, having at one stage fallen by as much as 140 points. Investors were also unnerved by strong US economic data which knocked shares on Wall Street and heightened speculation that the Federal Reserve may be forced to raise rates.

US fourth-quarter GDP figures were revised upwards to show an annualised growth rate of 6.1 per cent. The robust data gave a boost to the dollar, which climbed to a fresh record high against the euro, touching \$1.0887. The euro was also affected by weak eurozone industrial production figures published yesterday.

However, analysts have all but ruled out a rate cut when the European Central Bank meets on Thursday after the eurozone measure of M3 money supply unexpectedly jumped from 4.5 per cent to 5.7 per cent in January. A top ECB official also added to the impression that the bank will again leave rates unchanged. Christian Noyer, ECB vice-president, rejected claims that parts of the euro area, and in particular Germany, may be on the verge of deflation.

The pound also regained some ground against the euro, which fell from 68.54p to 68.01p. Against the dollar, the pound climbed from \$1.6013 to \$1.6075.

GEC deal in US marks start of transition

BY ADAM JONES

GEC took the first steps in its effort to redefine itself yesterday when it earmarked much of the cash it will receive from the sale of Marconi Electronic Systems to buy Reltec, a US telecommunications group, for \$2.1 billion (£1.3 billion).

When it announced the Marconi defence sale to British Aerospace in January, GEC said it would be left with about £2.7 billion in cash to pursue acquisitions, assuming the BAe deal receives regulatory clearance, plus a £4 billion "backstop" loan facility. Lord Simpson of Dunkeld, the GEC chief executive, had declared that he now wanted to create a business twice the size of "the old GEC".

Yesterday's deal was the first manifestation of this ambition and the market responded favourably, marking up GEC shares from 498p to 516p. Lord Simpson said: "We are moving on to the front foot to grow the business again as quickly as we can."

Reltec sells telecommunications hardware and services to blue chip telephone companies such as Sprint and BellSouth.

Michael Blogg, an analyst at Charterhouse Tilney, said: "It looks like a good deal. There was a concern that, with all that money due to them, they would go out and spend quite exorbitant amounts to get the sort of acquisitions they wanted."

He said the \$2.1 billion price, which includes \$361 million of assumed net debt, looked "quite reasonable" in relation to earnings. Reltec made unaudited earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation of \$139.8 million in 1998. It had sales of \$1.067 billion in 1998, with 86 per cent coming from the US.

GEC is paying \$29.50 per share for Reltec, whose shares had gone as high as \$49.50 last spring. Reltec's share price was hit last September by a warning that third-quarter results would be disappointing. The shares plunged to as low as \$12.625.

Lord Simpson said there had been problems with a Reltec subsidiary in Europe but he said these have since



George Iacobescu says there are five million square feet of potential offices and shops

Wharf float tax-break lure

TAX BREAKS worth hundreds of millions of pounds will underpin the £2.6 billion flotation of Canary Wharf. The Docklands office development, which yesterday confirmed its plans to raise more than £600 million in a new issue, will offer institutions the benefit of historic tax incentives worth some £400 million (Carl Mortished writes).

The 81-acre site east of the City of London still benefits from 100 per cent capital allowances made available to developers in Enterprise Zones. These mean that Canary Wharf can write off the entire construction cost of a building against its tax bill. The combination of tax breaks and losses in the early 1990s means that Canary Wharf will pay no tax for many years.

The prospect of a company shielded from the Inland Revenue is attractive. One expert said: "This will be the first tax-transparent property vehicle."

The flotation will spark a debate on how property companies should be valued. According to George Iacobescu, chief executive, there are five million square feet of potential offices and shops with planning permits at Canary Wharf.

A letting to Salomon Smith Barney is imminent, believed to be struck at £36 per square foot.

Airborne Canary, page 31

Approaches give 16% lift to First Choice

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SHARES of First Choice Holidays leapt 16 per cent yesterday after the company announced that it had received approaches from more than one potential buyer.

Airtours, its acquisitive rival, and Preussag, the German company that is buying 50.1 per cent of Thomas Cook, are seen as the most likely bidders. Other possible suitors include C&N Touristic, the second-largest German tour operator, and SAirGroup, the parent of Swissair.

Airtours, which failed in an attempt to take over First Choice in 1993, recently raised £300 million in fund acquisitions but would probably have to issue new shares to help to fund a new bid.

First Choice was valued at just over £607 million yesterday after its shares rose 24½p to 495p, while Thomson Travel rose 11½p to 180½p.

Shares in Airtours rose 18½p to 495p, while Thomson Travel rose 11½p to 180½p.

Analysts have been expecting to see large-scale consolidation among the travel companies since the industry emerged virtually unscathed from a recent Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation.

Shares in First Choice, which touched a low of 83p last October, rose strongly last week after it was rumoured that a bid of 220p a share, valuing the company at about £750 million, was being prepared.

Preussag, which has been replacing its traditional activities in steel, coal and engineering with travel and leisure, raised DM2 billion (£700 million) to expand its tourism business.

Preussag agreed in December last year to take over Germany's biggest chain of travel agents, First Reisebüro, and to buy 50.1 per cent of Thomas Cook. It already owns Germany's Hapag-Lloyd.

Analysts said yesterday that a combination of Thomas Cook and First Choice would make sense. Thomas Cook has strong products, while First Choice has the distribution channels. Moreover, Thomas Cook has a stake of 14 per cent in First Choice, a legacy from when it went to the aid of Owners Abroad when it was fighting off the 1993 Airtours bid.

First Choice announced in December that it had trebled its annual pre-tax profits thanks to acquisitions and cost-cutting. It also said that the outlook was good, with summer bookings 14 per cent ahead. Profit before tax for the year to October 31 rose from £15.4 million to £50 million.

The company has been building a network of travel agents, and recently announced plans to have about 700 shops within three years.

SAirGroup, as the Swissair holding company was renamed in 1997, bought a 49.9 per cent stake in LTU, a German charter airline and tour operator, last December as part of an attempt to create a new European leisure-travel group. LTU, which is based in Düsseldorf, is the parent of Germany's third-largest tour operator.

Speculation about First Choice has been fuelled by the fact that Phillips & Drew is a major shareholder with 13 per cent. The fund manager has recently brokered numerous takeovers for its poorer-performing stocks.

First Choice's management would share £4.3 million if they accepted a bid at the 180p level. Peter Long, managing director, would make £1.84 million.

Business Today

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Investors run for cover 30
Equity prices: 33
Unit trusts: 36



Anatole Kaletsky says Blair should face up to the euro's implications page 31

FTSE 100	6060.9	(-114.2)
Nikkei	8485.5	(-54.5)
DAX	2794.06	(-41.23)
Hank	14221.75	(-145.78)
New York Dow Jones	9252.72	(-13.88)
S&P Composite	1228.79	(-0.54)

100 RATE	
Foreign funds	84% (5%)
Long bond	5.57% (5.57%)
Yield	5.57% (5.57%)

5-year interest	5% (5%)
Life long rate	115.31 (115.29)

New York	1.0655 (1.0617)
London	1.6078 (1.6020)
Frankfurt	1.4705 (1.4659)
Yen	119.83 (119.85)
Yen	122.90 (120.03)
£ index	191.8 (190.5)

London	1.0881 (1.0825)
Yen	119.83 (119.85)
Yen	122.90 (120.03)
£ index	191.8 (190.5)

Tokyo close Yen	118.14
15-day (May)	810.95 (811.00)

London close	\$285.65 (\$285.85)
* denotes midday trading prices	
Exchange rates Page 28	

Care-costs blow for insurers

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

BRITAIN'S insurance firms suffered a blow yesterday with the report by the royal commission into long-term care recommending that the State meet the care costs of the UK's elderly population.

Insurers had hoped the commission would call for compulsory insurance or provision through private-public partnership. The Government has decided to put the proposals out to formal consultation and pending a final decision insurers are unable to take much advantage of the market, which has been worth about £100 million to them. Although just 10,000 people have bought long-term care plans, they can cost up to about £15,000 for a single-premium product.

The Association of British Insurers said that if the commission's proposals to split the cost of care from the cost of accommodation in nursing homes were implemented insurers could provide more affordable policies.

Mirror rejects Trinity SAB's muted opening

TRINITY, the UK's largest regional newspaper group, was last night considering its options after having its cash and shares offer for Mirror Group rejected out of hand (Raymond Snoddy writes).

Mirror Group told the Stock Exchange that it had rejected an indicative offer for the company, valuing it at about £1 billion, made by Trinity on Friday. Trinity had offered 0.35 new

Trinity shares and 40p in cash for each Mirror share valuing the deal at 210p. The value moved up to 215p a share by the end of the day as Trinity rose 9p to 495p after it announced a 13.4 per cent increase in pre-tax profits, before exceptional losses of £83.8 million.

Mirror Group said Trinity was offering "an inadequate premium for a change of control". Expressing surprise at the speed

of the rebuff, Philip Graf, Trinity chief executive, said: "It remains our intention that this should be done on a friendly basis."

Trinity's rivals for Mirror Group, Regional Independent Media, publisher of the Yorkshire Post, is likely to apply this week to the Department of Trade and Industry for formal permission to acquire Mirror.

Commentary, page 29

SHARES of South African Breweries, the latest migrant to the London Stock Exchange from the Cape, jumped to an immediate 19p premium yesterday as conditional dealings began (Robert Cole writes).

Stock was placed at 428p and closed the day at 447p, up 4.4 per cent. At one point the shares were changing hands at 460p. Analysts said the stock had received only a "lukewarm" reception.

SAB raised £150 million placing new shares in the company, but held back on its option to issue an additional £50 million of stock. An additional £150 million of shares being sold by pre-existing investors, however, were also placed.

Seventy per cent of the shares were bought by UK institutions. Another 20 per cent were sold to American investment houses with the remain-

Non.

Oui.

4.99% (5.3% APR) fixed to 31/3/2002.

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Results for the 6 months ended 31 December 1998

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Profit before tax and goodwill amortisation rose by 20% to £110.4 million, and interim earnings per share by 19% to 9.2p. In line with Hays' policy of consistently growing shareholder returns, the interim dividend will be increased to 2.0p per Ordinary Share.

Important Developments

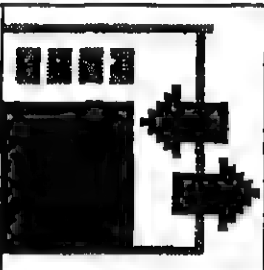
We continue to benefit from the trend towards the contracting-out of major business functions in the areas of distribution, commercial operations and personnel.

In addition, we are successfully expanding all three businesses' operations into the Continent of Europe through the careful acquisition and development of companies with compatible management structures and business philosophies.

Prospects

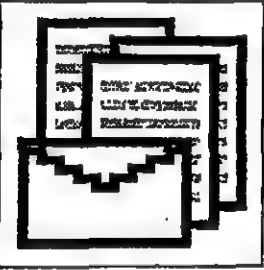
All three core activities remain well placed for growth. Planned future developments include new outsourcing contracts and further acquisitions to build on our increasing progress throughout Europe.

DISTRIBUTION



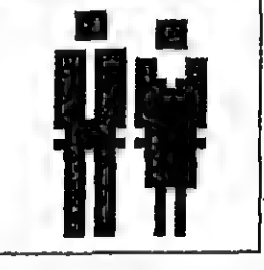
Operating profits were ahead of second half 1997 by 6% to £38.4 million. Our presence in all the major European countries is a great advantage as both retailers and manufacturers reorganise their distribution across Europe.

COMMERCIAL



Operating profit rose by 21% to £34.7 million. Mail Services is now a leader in pre 9 am deliveries in France. Following recent acquisitions Hays now offers a broad range of Business Process Support Services.

PERSONNEL



Operating profit up 30% to £41.6 million. Strong growth continues particularly for temporary placements. Hays Personnel is now well established in France in the specialist sectors of IT, Banking and Insurance staff.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1998

	1997	1998	%Change
Profit before tax*	£92.2m	£110.4m	+20
Earnings per ordinary share*	7.7p	9.2p	+19
Net dividend per share	1.7p	2.0p	+16

* Before exceptional items and amortisation of goodwill

To receive a copy of the Interim Report for 1998, please write to David Beckley.

Hays plc, Hays House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5HJ.

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Hays

THE BUSINESS SERVICES GROUP

SLPH profits halved by bad weather spell

By MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

GENERAL insurance profits at Sun Life and Provincial Holdings (SLPH), the UK insurer controlled by AXA of France, have halved as a result of bad-weather claims in 1998.

SLPH launched a £34 billion bid for Guardian Royal Exchange in January and said yesterday a strategic review would settle the fate of two of GRE's business units.

Rumours had been circulating that Mark Wood, group chief executive of SLPH, was preparing to sell GRE's Irish and UK Life operations once the deal had gone through. He said yesterday, however,

that it was "too early to say" what would happen to the businesses until the review had been completed in four to five months' time.

SLPH unveiled a 14 per cent rise in full-year operating profits in 1998 to £247.1 million (1997 pro-forma: £216.5 million).

Weather-related claims of £14.5 million affected SLPH's general insurance operating profit before tax which fell to £26 million (1997: pro-forma £52.2 million).

The insurer's results were boosted, however, by a 21 per cent rise in life and pensions operating profit to £210.3

million (1997 pro-forma £173.3 million).

The group said the 1997 merger between AXA Equity and Law and Sun Life had been completed within 18 months, six months ahead of schedule, and estimated savings had increased to £47 million (originally £37 million).

Asset management operating profit before tax increased 24 per cent to £29.1 million (1997: £23.4 million) and the full-year dividend is up 15 per cent to 13.5p per share.

SLPH said the proposed merger with GRE would generate £55 million of savings per year, up from the

previous estimate of £50 million.

The group has spent £6 million promoting the AXA brand but Mr Wood said he intended to keep the Sun Life brand and the PPP healthcare brand for the short term.

If the proposed deal with GRE goes ahead, the group would derive 61 per cent of premiums from UK life business, 10 per cent from health, 5 per cent from Ireland, 9 per cent from AXA's general insurance brands and 15 per cent from GRE's general insurance businesses.

Tempus, page 30

New chief for Close Brothers

Sir David Scholey, the former SG Warburg chairman, is to become chairman of Close Brothers, the independent merchant bank. He succeeds Michael Morley, who is retiring early because of ill health.

Yesterday Close reported a fall in pre-tax profits to £33.2 million from £36.75 million for the six months to January 31. Rod Kent, chief executive, attributed the fall in profits to an exceptional first-half last year.

Earnings were 18.35p a share (20.15p), but the interim dividend rises to 5.3p a share (4.8p). The shares fell 32p to 632.5p. City Diary, page 31

McBride departure

McBride, the manufacturer of supermarkets' own-label household products and washing powders, is parting company with Johan Vandepitte, one of its two managing directors, after a difficult half-year in which its sales were hit by the success of Persil tablets. Turnover rose 6 per cent to £248.4 million in the six months to December 31 helped by acquisitions. Pre-tax profits fell to £3.6 million (£4.1 million). Earnings per share fell from 6.9p to 2.9p. The interim dividend is maintained at 2.5p.

Shares dip at Ocean

Ocean Group, the transport and environmental services company, yesterday posted its fifth consecutive year of earnings growth but saw its shares fall 38p to 804p after it said the outlook was challenging and it failed to provide any fresh acquisition news. Underlying pre-tax profit was 13.1 per cent ahead at £83.1 million, for the year ending December 31. Underlying earnings per share rose to 17.95p (16.60p) and turnover was £1.33 billion (£1.13 billion).

Break talks to rival

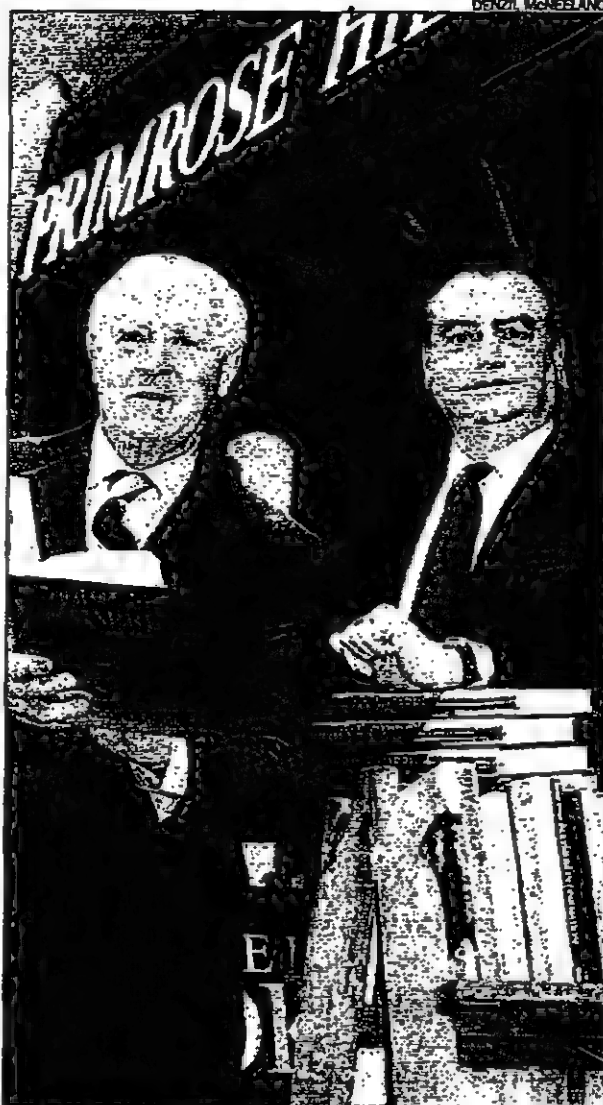
Break for the Border, the bar and restaurant operator, and Po Na Na Group, its Oxford-listed rival, are the latest leisure sector minnows to join the consolidation bandwagon. The companies issued a joint statement yesterday confirming that they were "in discussions which may or may not lead to a merger". The merged group would have a market capitalisation of about £35 million. A deal is expected within four weeks.

Boost for NTL

NTL, one of Britain's big three cable companies, yesterday completed a £500 million deal that will allow it to supply ITV and Channel 4 via its analogue service until at least 2012. The deal extends NTL's current contracts by ten years. The deal aims to secure transmission of the two channels until the Government switches off analogue signals.

Chesterfield sales

Chesterfield Properties, the company that is liquidating its estate and returning cash to shareholders, began the process yesterday with the sale of 16 sites, raising £100 million.



Open book: John Le Carré, left, with Tim Hely Hutchinson

Hodder makes big advance

By RAYMOND SNOODY

A RECORD pre-tax profit of £9.4 million left Tim Hely Hutchinson, chief executive of Hodder Headline, hoping that the stock market would re-value the publishing company.

The 15 per cent growth in profit for the year to December 31 was achieved on a 10 per cent rise in sales to £102.5 million. Hodder ended the year with net cash of £1.7 million, compared with borrowings of £2.5 million a year earlier.

"We can't find publishing companies to buy with sales growth of 10 per cent plus and net cash. They don't exist and yet we are at a discount to the market," Mr Hely Hutchinson said. The shares rose 25p to 260p yesterday.

Hodder lifted sales with best-sellers such as Dickie Bird's autobiography, Tom Clancy's *Net Force* and *Cold Mountain* by Charles Frazier. Sales in the first seven weeks of this year are 11 per cent ahead of last year and 18 titles have so far appeared on national bestseller lists, including John Le Carré's *Single & Single* and Josephine Cox's *The Guilted Cage*.

Earnings rose 13 per cent to 17.9p a share. A 5.55p final dividend lifts the total to 8p from 7.2p last time.

£100m mutuality boost

By CAROLINE MERRELL

YORKSHIRE Building Society is to spend £100 million this year on demonstrating the benefits of mutuality to its members through enhanced savings rates and lower mortgage repayments.

It is also introducing a rule that will make it harder for a pro-conversion resolution to be passed by members: any at-

tempt to convert the society by carpetbaggers will henceforth need 75 per cent support from members rather than just a straight majority.

Yorkshire yesterday announced a 24 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £68.6 million, on the back of net mortgage lending virtually unchanged at £908 million.

Revealing the plans to divert another £100 million to members, David Anderson, Yorkshire's chief executive, said: "We have given out mutual benefits worth £180 million over three years."

It was announced that as of yesterday the society's mortgage rate moved down to 6.6 per cent.

EU approval for Zeneca merger

By PAUL DURMAN

THE European Commission yesterday gave its blessing to the £45-billion merger of Zeneca and Astra after the companies agreed to address concerns over their combined market share in the treatment of hypertension and in anaesthetics.

Zeneca will have to continue financing the commercialisation of the local anaesthetic developed by Chiroscience as a condition of securing EU approval for the merger.

Astra's dominance

Astra's dominance of the local anaesthetic market in Europe has meant Zeneca has had to agree to hand back rights to the Chiroscience drug, which it acquired only last year. Zeneca has also given an undertaking to appoint an independent distributor for Tenormin, its betab-

blocker heart drug, in Sweden and Norway.

Zeneca said the undertaking needed to secure clearance would not have a material impact on its business. The merger still needs the backing of Astra's shareholders and American competition authorities.

Chiroscience needs to find a new marketing partner for the anaesthetic it calls Chirocaine. With Zeneca's support, John Padfield, Chiroscience's chief executive, still hopes the drug can be launched later this year.

Zeneca has agreed to hold on to its 3 per cent stake in Chiroscience for an undisclosed period beyond June, the end of the previously agreed lock-up period. Chiroscience shares rose 8p to 234p.

Pearson pushes ahead with German paper

By RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR

PEARSON, the media and information group that owns the *Financial Times*, announced yesterday that it is pushing ahead with the £60 million launch of a new business daily in Germany in a joint venture with Gruner + Jahr.

Neither the title nor the launch date of the paper are being announced at the moment but the new daily will be printed on FT-style pink paper and will aim to increase the business newspaper market in Germany.

Both Pearson and Gruner +

Jahr, one of Germany's largest magazine and newspaper publishers, are each expected to invest £30 million in the venture over the next three years. The aim is to reach an operational breakeven point by then.

Stephen Hill, chief executive of Pearson's FT Group and chairman of the new venture, said: "We can build a profitable and successful German language business newspaper in what is the world's third-largest economy."

The paper will be edited by

Andrew Gowers, until recently deputy editor of the *FT* and a German speaker. Although the new paper will carry some content from the *Financial Times*, it will be written, designed and published specifically for the German market. An associated website will also be launched.

The FT Group has already had success in business publishing in Europe through acquisition. The main opposition in Germany will be *Handelsblatt*, the country's established business daily.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

House price decline stirs downturn fear

HOUSE prices fell for the third time in four months, stoking fears of a downturn in the housing market. The Halifax monthly survey estimates house prices fell by 0.5 per cent in February, bringing the annual rate of house price inflation down to 3.6 per cent compared with 4.4 per cent in January. The sharp decline surprised the lender. Halifax gave warning that any further removal of mortgage interest tax relief on an increase in stamp duty in next week's Budget would harm consumer confidence even further.

Martin Ellis, economist at the Halifax, said: "It's a sharper downturn than we expected. But we think it is a temporary setback." The Halifax is still predicting the annual rate of house price inflation will be 4 per cent in the final quarter of 1999. The average price paid for a house was £73,004 last month compared with £73,406 in January.

Redrow sales ahead

REDROW, the housebuilder, underperformed the recent rally in its share price yesterday by saying that it is selling 4 to 5 per cent more homes in 1999 than in 1998. Redrow shares have bounced back from 125p in September, to 173p yesterday. Steve Morgan, chairman, said demand for houses should continue to be stable. Redrow announced a 13 per cent rise in interim pre-tax profits to £26.1 million. Sales were up 8 per cent at £161.1 million. Earnings per share were 8.6p (7.3p). A dividend of 1.5p (1.35p) will be paid.

Computerland tumbles

COMPUTERLAND felt the wrath of London's sensitive IT sector yesterday after a mild profits warning sent its shares down 37 per cent. Graham Gilbert, its founder and managing director, said orders for desktop computers were running about £2 million below the £15 million target for the half year. This comes two months after he told his sales staff to chase more profitable long-term service contracts instead of low-margin computer sales. The shares closed 59p cheaper at 100p against a high last July of 360p.

Finelist lifts sales

AN INCREASED focus on organic growth and a series of contracts with companies such as BT lifted interim sales at Finelist, Britain's largest car parts distributor, 39 per cent to £243.7 million. Pre-tax profit, however, for the six months to December 31, fell to £13.9 million from £14.4 million. Chris Swan, chairman, said: "The second half provides us with the chance to increase our hold on the UK market." The proposed interim dividend is up 3.7 per cent to 2.8p.

Aggreko powers ahead

AGGREKO, the power equipment hire group, promised to continue with its ambitious expansion plans, especially in the US, after beating analysts' forecasts for 1998 with pre-tax profits up 18.4 per cent to £39.3 million in the year to December 31. Turnover at the company, which was spun out of Christian Salvesen in 1997, rose to £178.9 million (£163.3 million) while the total dividend rose 9.3 per cent to 4.12p (3.77p).

Morse signals intent

MORSE GROUP, the computer distributor and services group, said it could be valued at as much as £367 million when it comes to the stock market at the end of the month. Morse said yesterday that its shares are to be priced in a range of 250p to 300p. At the middle of the range, the company will raise about £55 million to fund a capital reorganisation and pay off debt and to invest in overseas operations.

EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank Buy	Bank Sell	Bank Buy	Bank Sell	
Australia \$	2.69	2.51	Japan Yen	206.76	199.22
Austria Sch	21.22	19.56	Malay	9.889	9.810
Belgium Fr	62.46	57.50	Netherlands Gld	3.429	3.334
Canada \$	2.536	2.388	New Zealand \$	3.20	2.98
Danish Kr	11.51	10.67	Norway Kr	13.32	12.38
Denmark Dk	0.8947	0.8232	Portugal Esc	307.12	295.09
Egypt £	5.66	5.06	S Africa Rd	10.57	9.61
France Ft	16.66	15.66	Spain Ptas	255.97	237.18
Germany Dm	3.034	2.792	Sweden Kr	14.01	12.91
Greece Dr	489	460	Switzerland Fr	2.494	2.276
Hong Kong \$	13.28	12.08	Turkey Liras	579877	541234
India Ru	32.25	30.08	USA \$	1.713	1.570
Indonesia Rp	17829	12829			
Ireland £s	1.2116	1.2226			
Israel Sh	6.88	6.20			
Italy Lira	3020	2783			

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Sir Victor Blank's term as a newspaper proprietor looks likely to be short lived. The friendly merger talks the Mirror Group chairman had been having with Trinity have turned distinctly frosty. Instead of the amicable coming together which would have seen Sir Victor emerge as chairman of the enlarged group, the bid that has now been slapped on the table indicates that the services of the ingenious press baron would no longer be required. We are talking hostile here.

Perhaps this should not be surprising. It would have taken a degree of magnanimity for the Trinity chairman, Peter Birch, to have ceded the role to Sir Victor. After all, the Mirror Group chairman, in his role as deputy chairman of GUS, recently deprived Mr Birch of a future as chairman of Argos. Had GUS not succeeded in its hard-fought takeover of the catalogue retailer, Mr Birch would now be chairman. Instead, he has had to suffer the prolonged accusations from GUS chairman Lord Wolfson that, as a member of the Argos board at the time, Mr Birch did not adhere to the highest of City standards. While the Takeover Panel has largely dismissed the GUS carping, it can have done little to make Mr Birch feel well-disposed towards the Wolfson team.

He has easily replaced the lost Argos job with the chairmanship of Britain's biggest property company, Land Securities, but that is no reason why Mr Birch should feel inclined to hand over his role

as a media magnate.

Orchestrating genuine mergers requires a degree of altruism which does not always come easily. When Peter Birch was chief executive of the Abbey National, doing a remarkable job of transforming the building society, National Westminster suggested that together their organisations could make music. Despite the clear potential, the discussions were not prolonged.

Those synergies undoubtedly exist in putting Trinity and Mirror together to create the country's largest media group. The sheer scale means that the deal must now be put on ice while the MMC scrutinises the pairing. That will take many months, although any analyst could explain that the only problem areas are Scotland and Northern Ireland. If Trinity and Mirror had already agreed a friendly merger, they could already be presenting the MMC with the solution to those minor difficulties. Instead, there will be months of uncertainty, merely delaying the start of the real auction as RIM and Trinity fight over the prize.

In the meantime, Sir Victor Blank has to try to run Mirror as if it has a long-term independent future. That means saying goodbye to News Bunny and topless

darts: the buyers are already lining up for Live TV.

Sir Victor knows his task is to win the best price for Mirror. That is certainly closer to 230p than Trinity's sighting shot. But, given that the rival RIM is offering cash and major shareholders PDM have indicated their preference for some paper, a touch of friendliness, coupled with a little more generosity, might have given Trinity a winning edge.

Long-term this is not the answer

The insurance industry had hoped that the Royal Commission into long-term care was about to deliver a bonanza. The insurers' own efforts to sell policies that will pay out for nursing home fees have proved pitifully ineffective: this looks suspiciously like one area of financial services where misleading has not occurred. Yet demographics and the country's ability to meet the cost of an in-

COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

creasingly aged population pointed to a growing need for just this sort of insurance policy.

The Royal Commission does not think so. While a couple of its members voiced concern about the costs that the commission's proposals might be laying in store for future generations, the majority have been more concerned to ensure equity. This is fine in principle. It is clearly wrong that the prudent individual should be penalised for having amassed capital that can be used to fund nursing care in old age while the prodigal will be provided with the same level of care. But the bills have to be taken into account, and the bills will undoubtedly rise.

The Government now has to decide whether to act on the commission's report or put it on a shelf and concentrate on more palatable issues. It should do neither. The failing in the exercise was to try to isolate long-term care from the whole process of growing old. The subject needs to be viewed within the context of

the whole pensions debate which the Government once seemed so keen to initiate but which has degenerated into the sort of conversation in which no one listens to the others.

There is huge confusion now about the Government's plans on pensions. This is not just among those who should be paying for them but also among those who should be providing them. Instead of simplifying the system, the proposals for stakeholder pensions have been added as an extra tier on a structure already threatening to topple.

Yet, as the average age extends and retirement ages head in the opposite direction, the importance of ensuring that individuals make adequate provision for old age has never been greater. It should not be impossible for that provision to take account of the prospect that, at some stage during that prolonged retirement, they may need to pay for nursing care. The failure of insurers to sell their long-term care policies

owes as much to the reluctance of consumers to contemplate needing such treatment as it does to the expense.

Truly radical thinking could come up with a package which ensured that savers looked to a future which was realistic rather than rosy.

Blair's euro effect lasts just six days

Recession, what recession? Japan aside, the other three main currency blocs are suddenly all rethinking their drive of cutting interest rates to keep Eastern infections at bay.

In America, wage and activity indicators are buoyant. The Federal Reserve's next move could be upwards, some analysts now speculate, as Alan Greenspan seeks to continue his virtuoso performance of keeping economic growth on the tightrope between inflation and recession.

On the Continent, Germany may howl with exaggerated pain like a footballer appealing for a penalty. But referee Wim Duisenberg and his assistants at the European Central Bank say that the rest of euroland does not need a cut. Growth is healthy from Maastricht to Madrid and from

Milan to Dublin, so Germany will have to do without.

In Britain, where growth is still weakest and rates highest, job vacancies, new house reservations and even export orders are perking up. So the headlong cuts in base rates since November may well pause to let the world absorb Gordon Brown's Budget.

This is not convergence, but there is a short-term outbreak of policy coincidence. Why, then, has it caused sterling to rise against the dollar and therefore also against the euro?

Though dull, the UK economy is under more certain control than either of the other two. Denis Healey, New Europe's old bruiser, argues that the euro might not exist in five years time. Even the euro's biggest fan could not say that about sterling.

Fly more flags

THIRTY years to the day that Concorde had its first test flight, 13 of the measly 14 aircraft bought by the flag carriers of Britain and France are still profitably whisking financiers and celebrities across the Atlantic at speeds of which modern aircraft can only dream. The Anglo-French operation has long been superseded by Airbus. Flag carriers of the shareholding countries will still be expected to back the planned A300 super jumbo with orders to get it off the ground. Along with Air France, presumably Virgin Airways is already preparing to be a launch operator.

Burmah to repay £280m to investors

By CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

BURMAH CASTROL, the lubricants and chemicals group, surprised the market yesterday with plans for a £280 million capital repayment. The promised payout of 131p per share by way of a capital reconstruction boosted Burmah's flagging share price by 5 per cent to 859p.

The chemicals company, which owns the Castrol GTX motor oil brand, has been suffering from weak demand worldwide, in particular from economies in the Far East, such as Thailand, where Castrol had particular success in gaining market share. Asia Pacific accounts for a third of Burmah's business and its shares have almost halved in value from a peak of £13 last June.

Tim Stevenson, Burmah's chief executive, said yesterday that he was more optimistic than a year ago with trading conditions in Asia Pacific showing some signs of improvement.

Burmah yesterday reported flat pre-tax profits of £246 million, after excluding currency losses. Losses from currency fluctuations reduced operating

profit by £25 million last year, reducing reported pre-tax profit by 7 per cent.

Burmah is returning capital by way of a share split into ordinary shares and capital shares. Subject to Court approval, the latter will be cancelled by way of a cash payment or issue of loan notes. As a result, the ordinary shares in issue will be reduced by 16.7 per cent, boosting the company's earnings per share.

Mr Stevenson promised yesterday that Burmah would continue to restructure and indicated that acquisitions and disposals would focus the business further. A £110 million three-year reorganisation programme is under way and is expected to generate savings of £30 million per year by the end of the period.

Castrol's profit saw a decline from £211 million to £187 million after the currency hit. However, the company said it had gained market share despite intense competition and the market declines in the Far East. Chemicals profits were down £1 million to £75 million during the year.

Gucci to confront LVMH

By FRASER NELSON

GUCCI has called a showdown with rival LVMH on March 23, when it will hold a vote on whether it should accept a board director nominated by Bernard Arnault, the LVMH chairman.

Domenico De Sole, chief executive of Gucci, is urging shareholders to reject M. Arnault's nominee as "the eyes and ears" of the rival fashion houses in the LVMH stable.

Although M. Arnault had bought 34.4 per cent of the shares, Gucci has created an equal amount of shares that will be controlled by a trust — neutralising any sway he may have in the voting.

It is expected that Umberto Guidi, M. Arnault's nominated director, will be rejected unless LVMH promises not to buy any more Gucci shares and gives assurances that Signor Guidi will leave the room when its business secrets are discussed. LVMH is still trying to sue Gucci for issuing the new shares.

Aegis aims for top spot in US

By RAYMOND SNOODY

AEGIS, the advertising and marketing group, has set itself the target of being the number one operator in its field in the US within five years.

Crispin Davis, chief executive, said that Aegis, which yesterday announced a 17 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £51.1 million for the year to December, plans to expand in the US in areas such as the Internet, research, direct response marketing and sponsorship.

The company said it has as much as £100 million to spend on acquisitions. "The US represents 40 per cent of the world advertising market. We have made a very encouraging start there and the upside is enormous," Mr Davis said.

In January Aegis won a \$280 million (£170 million) contract from Pfizer, its biggest yet, and now hopes to topple the leaders of the fragmented US market, Y&R and McCann Erickson.

The full-year dividend rises 21 per cent to 0.85p.

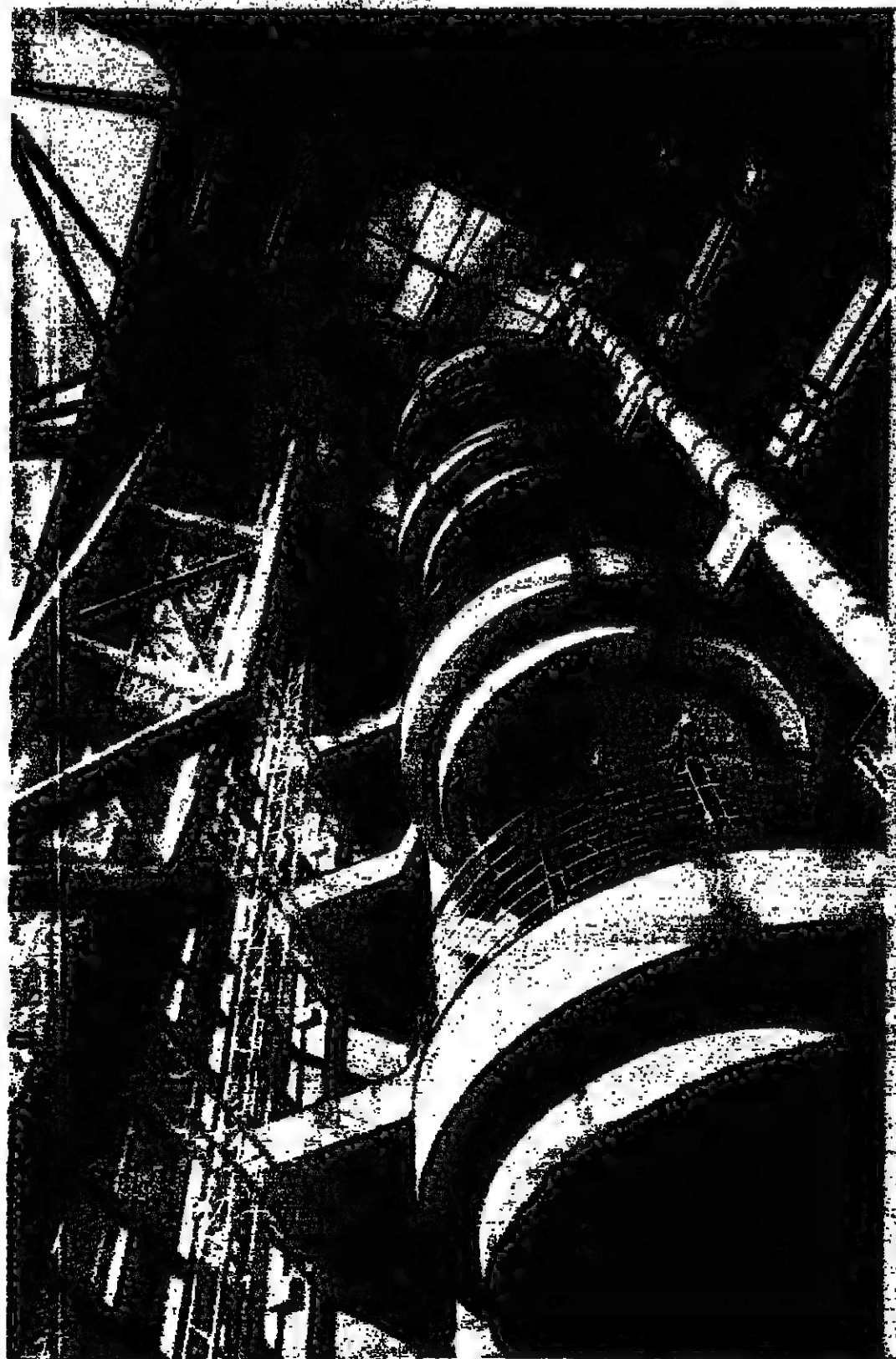
Shield improves its offer for Axis

SHIELD DIAGNOSTICS has been forced to improve its merger offer for Axis Biochemicals by 25 per cent to secure the backing of the Norwegian company's largest shareholders (Paul Durman writes).

Tharald Brovig, an influential Norwegian investor, and Mosvold-Farsund, a venture capital firm, agreed to back the deal only after David Evans, Shield's managing director, offered to sweeten the terms. The £180 million deal is

intended to create a world leader in the field of innovative heart disease tests. Shield will now have to offer 1.25 new shares for every Axis share.

Embarrassingly, the original deal was strongly backed by the Axis management headed by Svein Lien, who is to become joint managing director of the merged company. Mr Lien said the deal had to be announced in January before it was "exactly clear... what our shareholders [were] willing to accept".



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Time for Blair to face up to the euro's implications

New Europe offers the chance for an honest debate about Britain and the single currency

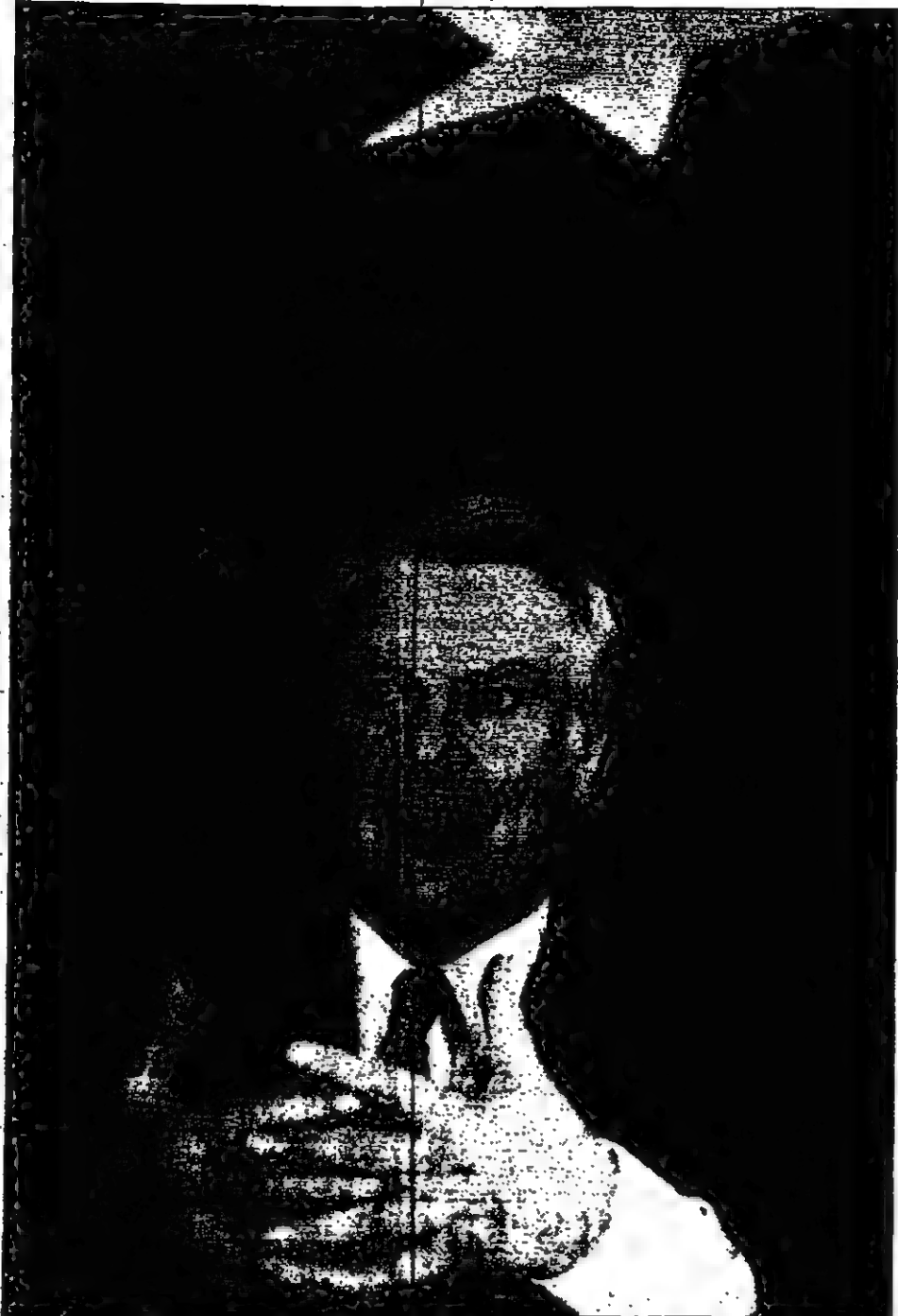
Looking back over the columns that I have written on this page since the new year, I was rather concerned to discover last week that six out of the eight headlines included the word "Europe". I was therefore determined to move on to another subject this week.

But writing for a daily newspaper means responding to the flow of daily events — and yesterday there was an event in London that I could not ignore. This was the launch of a new campaigning and research organisation called New Europe. The purpose of New Europe is to offer a positive, economically coherent and politically open-minded argument for Britain to remain a fully committed member of the European Union, while retaining its monetary and economic independence as a non-member of the eurozone. I naturally welcome the creation of New Europe, since its analysis coincides exactly with the one that I have presented since I joined *The Times* nearly nine years ago. But I must confess to two even more selfish reasons for indulging on the column's readers the seventh article on Europe in nine weeks.

My first selfish reason is simply that I was involved with Lord Owen and others in hatching the idea of New Europe. I had long been convinced that a group of respected centrist businessmen, economists and other public personalities with impeccably pro-European credentials could be assembled to present a persuasive case against Britain joining the single currency and, just as importantly, to demonstrate that opposition to joining EMU could be based on economic realism and geopolitical rationalism, not on tub-thumping nationalism, imperial nostalgia or right-wing xenophobia.

My second selfish reason for writing about the launch of New Europe is that it gives me an easy chance to respond to the many letters and e-mails that I have received of late, all with the same two demands: declare, once and for all, whether you are for or against Europe; and if you think that Britain should stay in the EU but outside EMU, please explain how a country can continue in this semi-detached state.

I now have an easy answer to both these questions. I can simply direct readers to the ten-page "statement of general principles" published by New Europe. This statement covers precisely the questions posed by so many readers and offers answers as good as any I have seen. It is obtainable either from New Europe's website, www.new-europe.co.uk, or from its physical address: 52



Lord Owen aims to show that it is possible to be pro-European but oppose the euro

Walnut Tree Walk, London, SE11 6DN, 0171-582 1001. Having said this, let me answer more directly the two questions I posed.

Am I for or against Europe? The answer is that I strongly support Britain's involvement not only in the EU and the single market, but also in several other forums of European integration, including the European Court of Human Rights and Nato. In fact, there are several areas in which I would support much closer integration than the Government. For example, I would like to see Britain abandon its border controls as part of the Schengen agreement, to abolish the absurd quarantine laws, to join the European time zone and to stop the tantrums about "getting back our money" in EU budget debates.

I do not believe, however, that all plans for closer European integration are *ipso facto* desirable for their own sake. And I do not accept that all efforts at greater European co-operation should be undertaken within the political structure of the EU. I believe, for example, that the EU lacks the democratic legitimacy and mature political structures to

send soldiers into war. What has all this to do with economic and monetary union? Monetary policy, taxation and public spending are, in my view, areas of national sovereignty every bit as important as foreign policy and defence. In these economic areas, just as in foreign policy and defence, the EU lacks the political legitimacy and the practical competence to justify an abandonment of national sovereignty. To say this is not to oppose any pooling of national sovereignty in economic matters under any circumstances.

Just as Nato represents a partial pooling of national military power, so the EU already represents a substantial pooling of national economic sovereignty. The rational argument of those who oppose EMU is not that they reject any pooling of economic sovereignty — as Tony Blair dishonestly claimed last week. It is simply that ceding control over monetary decisions to the European Central Bank is a bridge much too far, at least under the present constitutional arrangements in Europe. "Under the present constitu-

tional arrangements" may sound like a weasel phrase, designed to allow me to slide out of my opposition to EMU (an event which will be triggered, in the opinion of many of my abusive correspondents, the moment that I receive the relevant directive from Rupert Murdoch). But for me the constitutional position in Europe goes to the heart of the matter. I believe that EMU will only succeed for the continental countries if it gradually leads to a full-scale political union: the creation of a United States of Europe, about as closely integrated as the USA. Whether Britain should participate in such a United States of Europe would depend, for me, on two questions. What is the USE's political constitution — is it essentially a democracy or a bureaucracy? And what are Britain's prospects as an independent nation outside the USE?

The first question, about what kind of political Europe will be created as the natural corollary of EMU, cannot begin to be answered or even debated in Britain because all our "pro-European" politicians categorically deny that there is any prospect of creat-

ing a USE. If this is true, then Britain should stay out of EMU, because monetary union can only work in the context of much deeper political integration. If, on the other hand, Europe really is moving towards political integration, then that is the fundamental issue that Britain's politicians ought to debate. In that case Britain should surely not join EMU on the basis of the Government's false prospectus that this is a purely economic decision. Either way, whether Mr Blair's pretence that EMU has nothing to do with constitutional issues is mendacious or merely blinkered, joining EMU on the basis of this policy must surely be wrong.

As for the second question — about Britain's ability to survive as an independent economy — I think the answer is even more clear-cut. I am convinced that Britain can prosper as an independent nation, within the EU but outside EMU. In economic policy, we now have a successful arrangement for dividing the responsibility for monetary and fiscal policy between the Treasury and a Bank of England that is operationally independent but politically accountable to the Government. Until and unless this arrangement is found wanting, there is no reason to suppose that Britain, which is the world's fifth-largest economy and now its fourth-largest monetary power, should benefit from ceding control to the European Central Bank.

But what about the broader issue of Britain's relationship with Europe? Won't Britain lose influence in Europe? Won't Europe take its revenge on a semi-detached Britain by stacking the rules of the single market against it or even expelling it from the EU? I think that such fears are entirely unfounded. Not only do the European treaties provide Britain with a good deal of reassurance, but there is a much more powerful reason why Britain will be treated with respect by the rest of Europe.

To trade freely and co-operate with Britain is as much in Europe's interest as it is in ours. Britain is now easily the most important single trading partner of the newly merged eurozone. In fact, eurozone does as much trade with Britain as it does with America and Japan put together. Furthermore, European companies are much bigger investors in Britain than the Japanese. For eurozone to punish Britain for staying out of EMU would be cutting off its nose to spite its face.

I can only imagine one situation in which eurozone would even be tempted to consider such a policy of cutting off its nose to spite its face. If the British economy were performing extremely well, while the eurozone economy were suffering an economic disaster, Britain's independent success might become a source of embarrassment. So perhaps Britain should join EMU to avoid embarrassing eurozone if it does too well. Is that what Tony Blair really believes?

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Airborne Canary leaves ruins of the tower in its wake

As if Dennis Tunncliffe, chief executive of London Underground, did not have enough on his plate, there is now the tricky question of the rent on his office at Canary Wharf. Back in the recession, London Underground (LUL) took office space at Canary Wharf. It was a gesture of support for the project in which LUL and the Government had both a political and financial stake, building the Jubilee Line extension and lending a hand to a project which had the blessing of no less a person than Margaret Thatcher.

LUL signed a lease at the end of 1993 on a 283,000 sq ft office block at just £12 per square foot, a mere bagatelle of a rent that reflected recession and the insolvency of the landlord. It also spoke eloquently of the fact that no one wanted to work in a windswept and isolated colony of office towers in Docklands.

A lot has changed in five years and LUL will pay the price, not just in cost over-runs on the Jubilee Line but on the rent review on its lease at Canary Wharf. Mr Tunncliffe will soon have to warn his boss, the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, that the rent on LUL's corporate headquarters could more than double, from £3.4 million to £7.4 million.

LUL is just the beginning; it is payday for the once-improvident Canary. Tenants who struck deals at rents in mid-teens five years ago will be worried to hear that Salomon Smith Barney has agreed a rent in the mid-thirties. Canary Wharf is reaping the rewards of its former dependence on government five years down the road. Government support could not protect the company from ruin but, half a decade later, it has become a viable property business attracting tenants at market rents. The unintended twist in the tale is that the taxpayer is subsidising the profits of a commercial business to the tune of £400 million more than a decade after it was first mooted.

To be fair, Canary Wharf would never have happened without the Enterprise Zone Allowance. When the Canadian Reichmann brothers took over the Canary Wharf project in 1987 from G Ware Travelstead, the American developer, it had been given the thumbs down by the City as well as civil servants in the Department of the Environment who regarded Docklands as beyond the pale.

The Reichmanns had a vision, a development of North American scale in Europe's financial capital, akin to the brothers' world financial centre in New York. They had capital and they courted the people that mattered. Mrs Thatcher, then Prime Minister, was photographed in the cab of a JCB as the contractors broke ground on the site.

Unfortunately, for the Reichmanns, they had less influence over another power broker — the Corporation of the City of London. The City fathers refused to countenance a shift of the financial power base to the left-wing council of Tower Hamlets. So they unleashed a tide of competing office development and the flood not only put the Wharf under water but drowned several developers.

The cost of tenant inducements and slow lettings proved a drain on the Reichmanns' empire. Olympia & York (O&Y), but the financial cataclysm that hit

Five years on, the Docklands development has become a viable business, writes Carl Mortished

Canary Wharf originated in New York, where holders of O&Y's commercial paper refused to roll over their investment. That triggered a sudden requirement for \$400 million (£250 million) which could not be met.

There followed a saga of banks seizing the assets, administration and, eventually, rebirth as Paul Reichmann bought his way back into the development for £800 million in 1995, helped by Prince al-Walid bin Talal of Saudi Arabia, CNA and Franklin Mutual.

Mr Reichmann's determination might look like obsession to those unfamiliar with Docklands. But five years ago, the administrators did the right thing, protecting Canary Wharf from a receivership which would have extinguished the attraction of the asset. Under the Enterprise Zone scheme, developers benefited from 100 per cent capital allowances; the full cost of putting up the building could be offset against the developer's tax bill.

When Mr Reichmann bought back the development, he picked up a dowry of allowances and tax losses worth hundreds of millions of

pounds, to protect the company from the Inland Revenue. Meanwhile, things are going right at the Wharf. There is a bustle about the place, the footfall that is generated by 4.7 million square feet of fully let offices. CSFB is buying another half million square feet and HSBC is building a tower of one million square feet. The bigger prize is to the east — in the shadow of the tower of One Canada Square lie deep foundations waiting for steel frames. According to George Jacobescu, chief executive, there are five million square feet of potential offices and shops with planning permits.

This is a new, North American style of property development — "You want a building? How big? How many offices, trading floors, lavatories? When do you need it?"

Mr Jacobescu reckons the City cannot compete. "I looked at the design for Plantation House [a City development]. What happens if someone wants 700,000 square feet instead of 500,000 square feet?"

But could it all have happened without the lure of a massive fiscal holiday? Probably not, but that was another time and another Government. Today, the stock market is being offered a £2.6 billion tax-transparent real estate bet on the success of London as a financial centre over the next ten years. It looks plausible; the Canary is definitely airborne.



Canary Wharf has begun to attract tenants at market rents

Nice one Cyril

CYRIL STEIN, the legendary former Ladbrokes boss, phones me from his sickbed — a touch of the hury, apparently — to deny suggestions that he is poised to cash in his chips at the plush St James's Club, just off Piccadilly.

"There is no truth in it," he booms. "There was a rumour flying around the last few weeks — and we get approaches, of course, including one very recently — but there are no negotiations."



Stein: happily making money for himself instead of shareholders

When Stein acquired the club from the ill-fated Queens Moat Houses in 1994 for £5 million, he spent £3 million refurbishing it and talked boldly of opening St James's Clubs in cities all over the world (Peter de Savary, its cigar-chomping founding father, once made similar boasts before sailing off into the sunset).

Stein assures me he is still keen on the idea of a chain of St James's Clubs, and claims to be eyeing possible sites in New York. But for the time being he says he is "enjoying making money for myself, rather than for 70,000 shareholders".

So how, I inquire, did the sale rumour start? "It might have been when the managing director of Cliveden came to see me at the club," Stein opines. "But if I was going to do any deal I certainly wouldn't discuss it at the club."

SIR DAVID WHITE, the chairman of Mansfield Brewery, has been kind enough to send me a bottle of the company's Millennium Ale — an attractively packaged, limited-edition brew that is "designed to be drunk on New Year's Eve 1999". A word of caution to any would-be imbibers: among you, at 6.5 per cent ABV, any overindulgence is likely to preclude seeing in the new millennium in a waking state.



That isn't

THE dreaded image consultants have been up to their tricks again. SEC Group, the financial services provider, announced yesterday that it is to change its name to Le group plc. You may well ask. Sadly, the new identity has nothing to do with the Latin *id est*, but rather stands for "integrity" and "expertise" (qualities one automatically associates with financial advisers).

According to the blurb, the new name enables the group to offer "a unique, seamless and holistic approach to financial advisory services", and is designed to get away from its origins as Securitized Endowment Contracts. I am told that the name Le conveys, among other things, the

firm's "innovativeness" (sic). The only consolation is that the name change is subject to shareholder approval. If investors have any sense, they will vote against it.

Sad note

I WAS sorry to hear that ill-health has forced Michael Morley to retire early as chairman of Close Brothers. Morley, who is a gifted pianist, is one of those rare men who have worked in both industry and finance.

Although he was involved with Close Brothers from its earliest days, including a spell under the ownership of Consolidated Goldfields, he left banking in the 1980s and founded a specialist engineer called Paragon, which was eventually bought out by Portals, the banknote maker. He finally resurfaced for a second spell as chairman of Close Brothers in 1995.

Rod Kent, Close's managing director, says: "He's one of the very few merchant bankers who have also been merchants. He's also the only man I know who's been chairman of the same bank twice."

In flames

ON FRIDAY night, a colleague popped into Narn Long, the Knightsbridge cocktail bar beloved of James Archer and his fellow flaming Ferraris. Sadly, Lord Archer's son and his trader pals from CSFB were nowhere to be seen. Although there was still demand for the now infamous cocktail

from which the band drew their name — a £13 mix of spirits that is set alight and drunk through a straw — the Ferraris are understood to have switched to less potent drinks before their alleged trading misdeeds came to light. A portent of things to come?

IN ITS third-quarter report, Ionica says it "does not believe that its operations will be materially affected by Year 2000 compliance matters". Quite so. The telephone company's network was closed down at the weekend following its ignominious collapse into administration.

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Billiton guarded on bleak outlook

By PAUL ARMSTRONG

BILLITON has joined the growing band of international mineral mining companies to give warning that market conditions for natural resources could get worse before they get better.

Brian Gilbertson, chairman, said yesterday that the possibility of further falls in commodity prices remained, though he believed they were "pretty close" to the bottom of the cycle.

"I don't want to sound overly bullish and say things will turn around because it is still pretty tough," Mr Gilbertson said.

"We are keeping the hatches down and we are running the business on the basis that it will be difficult."

He was speaking after the South African-based mining group and FTSE 100 company, unveiled a 34 per cent plunge in attributable profit to £165 million (£103 million) for the six months to December 31.

The result, which was at the top end of market expectations, would have been significantly worse had it not been for a cut in aluminium production costs and exchange rate gains.

Billiton's themes were very similar to those expressed last week by its industry counterpart Rio Tinto, which also gave warning of a bleak outlook.

Rio restricted the fall in its pre-tax profit to 6 per cent in 1998 but said shareholders should not expect such a favourable outcome this

year. The company said that production levels and sales volumes were either maintained or increased slightly across all its operations.

Billiton ploughed \$1.5 billion into acquisitions in the period, including a buyout of the minority shareholders in the Australian-based nickel miner QNI.

It said this left it with a war chest of almost \$2 billion, which comprised \$685 million cash and the company's remaining \$1.26 billion debt facility.

But analysts said it was unlikely Billiton could fund a significant purchase, despite its conservative gearing level of 22 per cent.

They also gave warning that it would almost certainly fail to find any further substantial cost reductions.

"There are not a lot of areas for fat to come out," one analyst said. "It is a matter of sitting tight until the market turns."

Billiton shares, which are quoted on the London and Johannesburg stock exchanges, fell from a high of 186p last May to a low of 98p in August.

The interim dividend is to remain steady at 3.5 cents. The stock closed 1p lower yesterday at 134½p.

The portion of Billiton shares held on the London register has jumped to 51 per cent from 37 per cent at June 30 last year.

Tempus, page 30



John Simpson, left, with board members John Fleming, Terence Whitmore and David Donnelly

Mayflower set for US

MAYFLOWER, the bus and car bodies group, is expected to announce the fine detail of a link with Mercedes Benz in America this month (Adam Jones writes).

Mayflower, whose chief executive is John Simpson, said it is close to announcing its strategy for the US, where it wants to use its low-floor buses to break into a market where it has a negligible presence.

Last September, when it was engaged in a bid battle

for Dennis, the bus maker it now owns, Mayflower announced that it had an understanding with Daimler-Benz, the Mercedes holding company, for future co-operation.

Mayflower also said that it will not be unduly affected if Rover shuts down the factory at Longbridge in Birmingham. Mayflower makes bodies at Coventry for the Rover MGF car that is assembled at Longbridge. However, the MGF would almost certainly

be moved to another Rover plant if Longbridge shut and Mayflower's supply contract would continue.

Mayflower announced full-year profits of £42.6 million before tax and goodwill, up 28 per cent on 1997. Earnings per share fell from 8.6p to 4.7p. Sales were up 26 per cent at £495.2 million. Capital cuts saw net debt fall to £280.7 million. A dividend of 2.2p has been declared, making a total of 3.3p (2.75p) for the year.

Hays moves Tibble to business process

By PAUL DURMAN

THE finance director of Hays, the distributor and office services group, is to be moved over to run the group's newly assembled business process support group, one of Hays's fastest-growing operations.

David Tibble is to relinquish the group finance director's post to run the business process operations, which last year turned over £60 million. Mr Tibble is taking over from Graham Williams who is moving on to the operational side of the business, while Neil McLachlan, who has taken on an increasing amount of Mr Tibble's responsibilities, moves up to the group finance director post.

Hays formed the business process group from a series of acquisitions made over the past two years. These include Paperstream, an invoicing and payment processing firm, Castleton, which runs billing systems, DEI Group, which offers document management and imaging, and Axis Resources, an IT outsourcing business. Activities also include helping to run call centres.

Hays reported another set of strong results yesterday that showed pre-tax profits rising by 20 per cent to £10.4 million on turnover of £377 million. It is increasing its interim dividend by 16 per cent to 2p a share.

The growth was led by the personnel division, which increased profits 30 per cent to £41.6 million. Ronnie Frost, chairman, reiterated his confidence that Britain is not facing a recession. He said: "If anything, there could be an improvement in the slowdown in growth that's occurred over the last six months. There are not problems that are big enough to affect the results of the group."

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Sage launches £78m bid for Tetra

SAGE GROUP has launched a £78.1 million recommended takeover bid for Tetra, a rival business and accounting software supplier. The offer of cash and shares values each Tetra share at 305p, a near-63 per cent premium over the price at which the shares traded before bid talks were made public in late January. Tetra directors have given irrevocable undertakings to accept the offer in respect of 21.7 per cent of the company. Tetra shares rose 42p to 286p while Sage fell 40p to £19.77½.

Sage said the acquisition would accelerate its development in the mid-market sector and would give rise to cross-selling benefits. Yesterday Tetra announced operating profits of £1.6 million before exceptional items and non-recurring costs for the six months to November 30. In its last full year, the company, which came to the stock market in 1998, earned £3.4 million.

Perkins set to spend

PERKINS FOODS, which returned £58 million cash to shareholders last year, may hand back more money and make further acquisitions. At the end of the year to December 31, the company had £13 million of cash and about £60 million borrowing facilities, Ian Blackburn, chief executive, said. Pre-tax profit rose from £28 million to £55.1 million after the company made a profit of £33.6 million on the disposal of its fresh produce division. Diluted earnings per share rose from 9.7p to 29.7p and a final dividend of 2.85p (2.8p) will give a full-year payout of 4.65p (4.6p).

Danisco acquisition

DANISCO, the Danish food group, yesterday agreed to buy Culter, the Finnish ingredients company, for DKK9.5 billion (£881 million), creating Europe's sixth-biggest food company. The new group, to be headquartered in Copenhagen, will retain the Danisco name. In sugar and sweeteners the enlarged Danisco will become the fourth-largest maker in Europe after Sudzucker of Germany, France's Eridania and British Sugar. It will leapfrog ICI Quest and Dutch-owned DSM GI Brocades to become Europe's largest food ingredients maker.

D&G profits advance

DOMESTIC & GENERAL, the specialist domestic appliance breakdown insurer, saw pre-tax profit rise from £6.65 million to £7.3 million in the six months to December 31. Turnover was up 10.3 per cent to £49.7 million in a period that the company said had been one of "both stability and progress". Diluted earnings per share rose from 13.08p to 14.29p and the company will pay an interim dividend of 4p (3.5p). The shares fell back 5p to 59p yesterday, having recently touched a high of 62p.

Horace Small sells

HORACE SMALL APPAREL is raising £35.8 million through the sale of its North American clothing businesses. The disposal of Horace Small Holdings Corporation, announced yesterday, will trigger the payment of executive bonuses totalling \$600,000 (£375,000) to three senior directors of the subsidiary. In 1998 the US businesses earned operating profits of £900,000 on turnover of £72.1 million. The buyer is VF Workwear. Some £35 million on the balance sheet will be returned to shareholders. Horace Small shares rose 28p to 79½p.

Pendragon cautious

PENDRAGON, the motor dealer, expects the new car market this year to be weaker than in 1998, although the outcome was difficult to predict because of the new system of two registration plate changes in March and September. The company, whose takeover of rival Evans Halshaw was completed last month, reported a rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £18.66 million from £15.08 million in the previous 12 months. Earnings were unchanged at 21.2p a share. The total dividend rises to 12p a share from 10.7p, with a final 8p.

Dixon Motors ahead

DIXON MOTORS, the car retailer that is also the UK's largest retailer of motorcycles, reported a rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £11 million from £8.7 million on turnover that rose to almost £638 million from £413.6 million. Paul Dixon, chief executive, said the company had made an encouraging start to the year, with like-for-like used car sales up 17 per cent and motorcycle sales up 29 per cent. A final 6p dividend lifts the total 20 per cent to 9p, payable from earnings that were little changed at 26.5p, against 26.3p, because of a higher tax rate.

The Corporate Bond PEP

Source: F&C INVESTMENTS. The running yield of the Fixed Interest Trust was 6.1% (4.7% redemption yield) as at 1 February 1999. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. Both capital and income values may go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount invested. All companies of our portfolio are PEP-eligible which means that you can apply for PEP-eligible shares in our Trust. The value of tax relief will depend on your individual circumstances. Full written details are available on request. Legal & General (Investments) Limited, Registered in England No. 2142981. Registered Office: Temple Lane, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4Q 3DF. Representative only of the Legal & General marketing group, members of which are regulated by the Financial Services Authority and FSA for the purposes of non-soliciting, advising on and selling life savings and investment products. Having Legal & General's name, a member of MIFID, investors should be aware that under the MIFID rules the capital value of investments in Fixed Interest Trusts is not guaranteed. The Government have announced that contributions can now be made in 1999 and April 2000. From that date a new tax protected scheme (which the Individual Savings Account (ISA) will be available from 1st October 1999).

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Legal & General

F&C puts faith in buyback plan

By ROBERT LEA

FOREIGN & Colonial, the largest general investment trust quoted in London, yesterday said it is putting faith in a £300 million share buyback programme and the launch of its own individual savings account next month to boost its flagging share price.

The trust reported that at December 31 net assets had risen by 11.8 per cent to £2.39 billion or 271.41p a share. However, over the same period F&C's share price had risen by just 7.1 per cent to 188½p - a 17.2 per cent discount to net asset value.

Blame for the widening discount is attached to F&C's investment performance, which beat the 10.9 per cent growth

of the FTSE All-share index but lagged behind the returns from index-tracking funds following the FTSE 100 and the Dow Jones on Wall Street.

John Slater, the chairman, admitted a number of investment failings including limited exposure to the strong-performing UK telecoms sector. He said F&C will be redoubling its efforts to raise its profile with investors: "We are expanding our own marketing efforts and the launch of the ISA presents a particular opportunity for us."

F&C shares rose ½p to 195½p. The dividend per share is up to 2.7p from 2.5p.

Tempus, page 30

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Equities fall in thin trading

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122

BANKS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST.

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

ELECTRICITY

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

BUILDING MATERIALS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

ELECTRONIC & ELECT.

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT.

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

CHEMICALS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

ENGINEERING

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

CONSTRUCTION

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

INSURANCE

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

ENGINEERING VEHICLES

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

DISTRIBUTORS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

PRINTING & PAPER

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

MINING

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

LEISURE & HOTELS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

PROPERTY

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
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TRANSPORT

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

WATER

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

ALTERNATIVE INV. MARKET

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

RETAILERS, FOOD

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

RETAILERS, GENERAL

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

PHARMACEUTICALS

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

SHORTS (under 5 years)

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

LONGS (over 15 years)

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

UNDATED

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101

SUPPORT SERVICES

1999	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
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THE TIMES TUESDAY MARCH 2 1999

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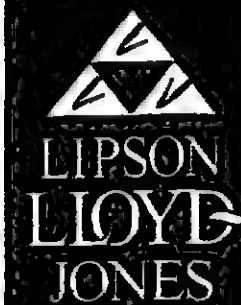
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TELECOMS CO 2-4yrs
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This long established 16 partner City firm has a strong practice handling the development and protection of assets for high net worth individuals. A new member of the team is sought with particular expertise in taxation. You will enjoy an unrivalled reputation and congenial environment.

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If you handle a mix of contentious and non-contentious work and would like a 'quality of life' move, which enables you to maintain your quality of work, the opportunity to join this firm should not pass you by. City location, refreshing culture & a negligible amount of corporate support work.

COMMERCIAL LITIGATION NQ-2yrs
Everybody wants to work for this West End media practice, which now has a rare opening for a junior lawyer in its litigation department. You will handle a broad blend of work including media, contracts, IP, defamation & property.



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Commercial Lawyer

At Allied Domecq is one of the top 500 companies in the world. Owned by British American Tobacco, it is a leading producer of fine wines, spirits and cigars. As a leading company in the world, Allied Domecq has a reputation for excellence in its products and services. We are looking for a Commercial Lawyer to join our team. The successful candidate will be responsible for advising on all commercial matters relating to the company's operations. The role involves a high level of responsibility and requires a strong understanding of commercial law and the company's business. The successful candidate will be a member of the legal team and will be expected to provide high quality legal advice to the company's management. The role is a full-time position and requires a minimum of 5 years' experience in a commercial law firm. The successful candidate will be a member of the legal team and will be expected to provide high quality legal advice to the company's management. The role is a full-time position and requires a minimum of 5 years' experience in a commercial law firm.

Within our spirits & wine business, in this newly created post, you'll have every opportunity to develop the influence of our legal team. In particular, you'll be part of a working party dedicated to creating a globalised legal support service for the company.

Your remit will include providing a more comprehensive service to our Asia Pacific and European operations, including Spain. We'll also look to you to increase the emphasis on customer service and, in doing so, add significant value to the business.

A UK qualified solicitor you must have at least 5 years' PQE. You'll need commercial experience, gained in a domestic and international environment. What's more, you should also be an objective, individual who can listen and persuade as well as develop innovative ideas and approaches. Linguistic ability and a willingness to travel are both essential. Highly motivated? Results orientated? Clear potential for longer-term career progression? The ability to establish your 'blueprints'?

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The Company

Within its first six months the company has grown, by acquisition, to become one of the largest operators in Europe in its chosen niche. Backed by the same venture capital organisation which enabled a similar company in the USA to grow sales of \$0.4 billion from 217 locations in three years, the objective is to repeat that success in Europe.

The Role

The company is seeking to appoint its first lawyer to work closely with the Chief Executive and Finance Director in London to drive the growth of the company. There will be significant M&A activity Europe-wide, the Head of Legal will be an integral part of the transaction team and will carry responsibility for the full range of corporate legal issues.

Your Profile

- At least five years PQE, experience in-house preferable, both corporate and commercial skills, some cross-border transactional work.
- European languages (particularly German and/or French) a strong advantage.
- An astute negotiator, strong influencing skills, the maturity and presence to present legal implications and strategy to the Board, focussed on commercial results.
- Adept at commissioning specialist legal advice where necessary and liaising with advisers across diverse European jurisdictions.

This is a truly exceptional opportunity to build a company which intends to make its presence felt in the next millennium. It will suit an ambitious, entrepreneurial lawyer who has solid technical skills but is not afraid to roll up sleeves to get the job done.

For further information, in complete confidence, please contact
Kate Stoddart on 0171 405 6082
(0200 880 233 evenings/weekends) or
write to her at QD in-house Legal.

email: kate.stoddart@qdgroup.co.uk

QD in-house Legal
37-41 Bedford Row
London
WC1R 4JH

Tel: 0171 405 6082
Confidential fax: 0171 831 6394
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QD
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EMPLOYMENT PARTNER

This successful mid-sized London practice has benefited from strong leadership and a clear sense of direction. The employment team enjoys a particularly high profile working closely at board level with a number of blue chip companies. They seek an energetic, successful young partner with evidence of marketing and practice development ability. A future head of department role is an offer for the right person. (Ref: 25800)

INSOLVENCY

This highly successful City firm, already a substantial player within the banking and financial services sectors, is to develop its insolvency practice. As a result the firm is now looking to appoint a partner who will possess the commercial acumen and dynamic approach required in order to progress this lucrative area of work. As the firm already acts for leading UK accountancy firms, banks and financial institutions, there is enormous potential for growth. (Ref: 25601)

TELECOMS/NEW MEDIA

An exciting culture has made this one of the leading City firms in financial services and investment funds work. This is a great opportunity to join a team at the heart of the firm's strategy for the future. You will benefit from a blue chip client base and a commitment on the part of the firm to develop this sector. Lawyers with ability and enthusiasm currently focusing on corporate, commercial banking work will be offered retaining. (Ref: 19299)

FINANCIAL SERVICES/FUNDS

The London office of this premier (Canadian) firm practices both UK and Canadian law. Working with a number of the firm's key international clients, the project finance team is particularly busy and is looking for a lawyer with up to 4 years' experience to provide UK law advice on some ground breaking projects. On offer is the quality of the highest quality, a friendly, supportive culture, a balanced lifestyle, excellent prospects and a step-up in salary. (Ref: 25600)

PROJECT FINANCE

The London office of this premier (Canadian) firm practices both UK and Canadian law. Working with a number of the firm's key international clients, the project finance team is particularly busy and is looking for a lawyer with up to 4 years' experience to provide UK law advice on some ground breaking projects. On offer is the quality of the highest quality, a friendly, supportive culture, a balanced lifestyle, excellent prospects and a step-up in salary. (Ref: 25600)

For further information on private practice vacancies please contact Andrew Castfield or Yvonne Sayeh (both qualified lawyers) on 0171 523 1240 (01483 828110 evenings/weekends). Box 0171 523 3839. E-mail: andrew.castfield@zamb.co.uk
Alternatively please write to them at ZMB, 37 Sun Street, London EC2M 2PL.

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PRACTICE

Bank/Fin Litigation 2-8yrs' pge
Leading City practice seeks academically well-qualified assistants from firms known in this field, to do financial regulatory work/banking disputes.
Ref: 37934 Tim Greenland

Insurance Litigation NQ-2yrs' pge
Join this litigation team in a leading City practice. Work will include professional indemnity, product liability and reinsurance disputes.
Ref: 29188 Claire Weston

Construction NQ-4 yrs' pge
Construction lawyer sought to work in an established department of a medium-sized City firm. Must have had previous related experience.
Ref: 36689 Jessica Jay

INDUSTRY

Commercial 2-4 yrs' pge
Leading investment bank seeks commercial lawyer to deal with a range of contractual issues (emp, IP/IT). Excellent opportunity.
Ref: 43250 James Newman

Bid Manager 3yrs' pge
Renowned IT company seeks a contracts specialist for senior cross-divisional role: strong negotiation skills essential; IT experience preferable.
Ref: 40107 Andrew Regan

Regulatory 2-7 yrs' pge
Variety of roles at junior & senior levels involving policy, enforcement & regulation for bright litigators who aspire to something different.
Ref: 37171 Claire Hine



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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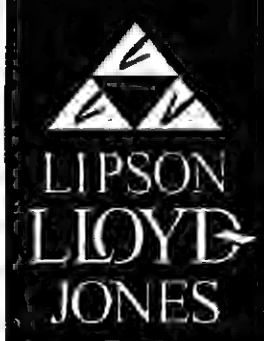
City 4PQE+

Our client, a major international bank, seeks to recruit a senior lawyer to join its high profile City based Legal Department.

The work will involve advising on a range of legal and commercial issues relating to trade and commodity finance, project finance and commercial banking. The successful candidate will be responsible for drafting and developing both existing and new capital and money market products, facility letters, foreign exchange, loan and structured finance documentation.

Applicants must have previous relevant experience gained within a banking or commercial environment. Strong communication skills are essential, together with the personality and ability to work as a member of a team. The successful candidate will also be expected to deputise for the Head of the Department.

If you would like to apply for this exciting opportunity, contact Lucy Boyd, Director, for a confidential discussion.



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(a) Employment & General

£28,830 - £32,298 pa inc.

(b) Enforcement & Civil Litigation

(Job share - 17.5 hours per week)

£28,830 - £32,298 pa inc. pro rata

The London Fire & Civil Defence Authority's Legal Branch has vacancies for two lawyers, on whole time and one job share. The whole time vacancy is in the General, Property and Employment Team which deals with employment law, employment litigation, conveyancing, property, planning law and advice on some non-contentious matters. The job-share vacancy is in the Litigation Team, which handles personal injury litigation, other civil litigation, and fire safety enforcement work for the London Fire Brigade.

Under the general direction of the relevant Team Leader you will either:
(a) manage a personal caseload of employment advice (and associated matters, including discipline and pension issues) and employment litigation, train staff in the Fire Service (Discipline) Regulations 1988 and provide general advice covering areas of law relevant to the LFCA, which are not handled elsewhere in the Branch, or
(b) manage a personal caseload of civil litigation work (mainly personal injury and damage to property cases); criminal prosecutions (and related appeals and judicial reviews) and other enforcement activity under fire safety and other enforcement legislation; and give lectures and train staff (e.g., in collecting evidence having regard to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984).

In each case, we are looking for a qualified solicitor or barrister with at least five years post-qualification experience and up-to-date knowledge and practical experience in the law and practice relevant to the Team's activities, or someone with demonstrably comparable breadth and depth of legal knowledge, based on systematic legal study, and comparable and very substantial recent experience. We rely on up-to-date computing facilities and case management software and you will have keyboard experience or the willingness to acquire the necessary skills quickly.

The Litigation job share vacancy arises due to a return to work from maternity leave on a job share basis; the working pattern will be Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday one week and Monday & Tuesday the next.

For further details and (an) application form(s) please contact Mr B Lawrence, Dept S, Legal Branch, Room 611MB, Fire Brigade HQ, Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SD or call 0171-587 4897 quoting ref. FB 107 for the whole time Employment & General Lawyer post and FB 108 for the job-share Enforcement & Civil Litigation Lawyer post. Please state clearly the post(s) that you are interested in. Closing date for the submission of completed application forms is 19 March 1999.

London Fire Brigade

TO PROTECT AND SERVE

Striving for Equal Opportunities

Assuranceforening SKULD (Gjensidig) was founded in 1897 and has offices in Oslo, Bergen, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Paris and Hong Kong. The organisation's purpose is mutual insurance of liability and loss incurred by the member in direct connection with the operation of their ships. SKULD is, with its 180 staff, one of the world's leading companies within P&I insurance. There are 110 staff at the head office in Oslo.

LAWYER Legal Department - Oslo

The legal department has 10 staff members working in an international environment. The department is responsible for Skuld's claims handling of defence cases (FD&D), and provides advice to other departments and to members as required.

The position will include:
- Appraisal of all types of maritime contracts and cases
- Assistance to members and in-house
- Management of Legal proceedings (arbitration and court cases)
- Active participation in seminars

The right candidate will have:
- Practised as a lawyer with expertise in maritime law
- In-depth knowledge of English law
- Preferably 2-3 years experience within insurance/Defence/P&I
- Excellent communication
- Written and spoken language abilities preferable both in Norwegian and English

The right candidate will:
- Show commitment and ability to work as part of a team
- Be thorough and efficient
- Have high standards of quality and be able to work under pressure

We can offer:
An international and challenging position with excellent opportunities for work and personal development, competitive salary and good social benefits.

For more information, contact Frank Riley, telephone: +47 22 00 22 65. Enquiries in complete confidence can also be directed to Hans Kristian Henriksen, Mercuri Urval, telephone: +47 90 75 20 82. If you want more information about Skuld you can also visit our website: <http://www.skuld.no>

Written application with CV and copies of references and qualifications should be sent to our Personnel Department by 12 March 1999.

Assuranceforening Skuld (Gjensidig) Postboks 1376 Vik, 0114 Oslo, Norway. Telephone: +47 22 00 22 00; fax: +47 22 42 42 22

WILMER CUTLER & PICKERING

International Litigation / Arbitration

1 - 4 YEARS' PQE

As part of the continuing growth of its international dispute resolution practice in London, Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering is seeking first class lawyers with commercial litigation and/or arbitration experience.

Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering is an international law firm based in Washington with a pre-eminent reputation across a range of practice areas. It has one of the leading international arbitration practices in London. It is continuing to expand that practice and extending it further into the field of commercial litigation.

Successful candidates will have excellent academic qualifications and litigation experience, preferably gained at a leading City firm. They will be assured of high quality, challenging work in a friendly, collegial atmosphere, with a premium remuneration package and good career prospects.

For further information, in complete confidence, please contact Yvonne Smyth or Fiona Bennett on 0171 523 1240 (evenings and weekends 0171 359 5937) or write to them at ZMB, 37 Sun Street, London EC2M 2PL. Fax on 0171 523 3839. E-mail yvonne.smyth@zaragroup.com



London - overseas - industry

Researchers / writers

Research on Chambers Directory is well underway, and yet again we have an excellent team. They are talking to lawyers and clients about trends in the profession and the merits of the various law firms. But the research keeps expanding. We need more researchers to do it. If you're free for a few months and would like a taste of legal publishing - and a bird's-eye view of the legal profession - you might enjoy being on our research team. Your main task will be to gauge the opinion of clients and leading practitioners about their colleagues and competitors and to write up the collective views. This requires insight, objectivity and a sense of responsibility. Your findings will affect lawyers' gradings in the tables we publish, and these tables are taken seriously by clients. They can influence the development of a firm's practice. Our research, therefore, needs to be carried out with great care. If you would like to discuss the work of a researcher, please telephone the directory's editor, Reena SenGupta, on 0171 606 1300.

Michael Chambers

Our legal directory is available at £45 from BATES.

Tel: 01403 710971

Industry

IP/IT lawyer Herts
Solicitor with approx 4 years' ppe for legal department of major consumer goods company. Work includes IT, media and IP issues, EU matters and general commercial law. Excellent benefits package.

Financial services London
Solicitor with approx 10 years' experience of leasing and financial services to join high calibre legal department of fast growing services company.

Junior commercial London
Junior lawyer 0-2 years' ppe for broad commercial role in insurance company including employment, EU and competition and litigation. French language skills an advantage.

London & Overseas

Partnership Positions
We have been assisting partners seeking a career move for 25 years and are regularly placing several partners each month.

Commercial litigation City
Full service medium-sized firm with strong litigation practice seeks 1-2 year qualified solicitor for general caseload to include all forms of national and international disputes.

Competition partner/team US firm
Expanding London office of leading US firm seeks competition partner/team. Firm represents a breadth of major industrial corporations including large percentage of Fortune 500 companies.

International corporate partner City
London office of US firm with established full-service capability seeks senior solicitor with first-rate City credentials to service major US clients investing in Europe. £500-800,000

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E-mail: info@chambersrecruitment.co.uk

Sonya Rayner, Morwenna Lewis, Deborah Kirkman, Stuart Morton

Commercial litigator Herts
Electronics company seeks lawyer c. 2 years' ppe to handle a mixed caseload including contractual, tortious, IP and employment matters. Expectancy of advocacy at ET's useful.

Legal adviser West End
Solicitor with 4-5 years' general comm experience to join est. leg dept of major manufacturing co. Some international exposure. Dynamic personality and sense of humour essential.

Engineering lawyer Midlands
Commercial lawyer with min 5 years' experience for key operating division of major engineering group. Sound comm. acumen and awareness and scope of handling agreements in electrical/mechanical engineering sector preferred.

David Woolfson, Paul Thomas, Emma Ridley

Property litigation City
Premier litigation practice with highly respected stand alone property dept. seeks 1-2 year qualified solicitor to further expand. Friendly team, led by one of the market leaders, handling landlord and tenant matters for high profile clients.

Company/commercial Central London
Leading media firm offers newly qualified solicitor broad spread of company/commercial work plus income secondment with exciting client. Acquisitions, disposals, commercial agreements.

Commercial property Professional support
Leading, national firm, highly regarded in the field, seeks property solicitor with at least 4 years' ppe for professional support role including new starters, marketing, training.

Insolvency litigation Herts
Excellent opportunity to work within a team headed by a LLP which is inundated with work from 'Big 6' firms, LLP connections and banking department referrals. Suit ambitious solicitor c. 1-5 years' ppe.

CHAMBERS
PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT

Influence the future of the investment industry

Legal Adviser

We are seeking a confident, articulate team player to provide legal support to our policy-makers and front-line supervisory teams. Focusing primarily on markets, exchanges and clearing houses, you will monitor, identify and research a wide, complex range of legal issues, producing advice and recommendations that will have a major bearing on our work.

To be considered you should be legally qualified (e.g. be a solicitor/barrister), have experience of financial services law or a related area of law such as corporate finance, or have regulatory experience from an investment exchange, clearing house or investment bank or broker. In addition you should have strong advisory, research and analytical

skills. This should be matched by fluent writing skills and by an innovative, pragmatic approach.

In return we can offer you broad industry exposure, as well as the opportunity to become an expert in this rapidly developing area of our work. You will also have a key role to play in shaping the regulatory framework - as a valued adviser to our senior managers. This position also offers first-rate prospects, training and rewards.

For an application form please telephone 0171 269 6204 quoting reference BA360.

Closing date for receipt of completed application forms: 17th March 1999.



Financial Services Authority

INDUSTRY MARCHING ON

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY TWO POSITIONS

Unusually we have two genuinely rare opportunities for commercial property lawyers to make their first move in-house. Both these roles demand between 2-4 years' ppe gained in a leading property department/property company and the role is work in a front-line transactional role. In return, as a young lawyer in a thriving commercial team, you will be given the chance to make your mark in a dynamic business that offers fantastic long-term rewards. (Ref 26050)

RISK MANAGEMENT/COMPLIANCE C£100,000

This leading financial services company is creating a senior management role for someone with heavyweight compliance experience in the retail (as opposed to investment banking) sector. You will act as the bridge between the global operational compliance teams and management, to identify risk management issues that affect the whole group. This will be a key appointment for the group and the role will require gravitas as well as technical expertise. (Ref 25824)

SECURITISATIONS

C£70,000-++
Pre-eminent investment bank is looking for a securitisation lawyer with a minimum of five years' post qualified experience (some of which will preferably have been gained in the US) to join its cutting-edge transaction team. As an integrated member of a group that includes bankers and lawyers you will get front-line commercial exposure in a fast-paced environment. The role will require stamina but the rewards will be exceptional. (Ref 25911)

WORKS - GEN COMM

This established UK insurer with a highly regarded reputation and market leading products seeks a 1-5 year qualified lawyer to assist its General Counsel and perform a wide-ranging commercial role. With a career path in prospect and based at an attractive greenfield site with its own sporting amenities, this is an attractive opportunity for a junior lawyer considering the in-house alternative. (Ref 25702)

COMPETITIVE

West End
Solicitor with 4-5 years' general comm experience to join est. leg dept of major manufacturing co. Some international exposure. Dynamic personality and sense of humour essential.

For further information please contact Elizabeth Williams or Lizzie Orange on 0171 523 1250 (0171 394 8074 evenings/weekends). E-mail elizabeth.williams@zaragroup.com Alternatively please write to ZMB Industry, 37 Sun Street, London EC2M 2PL. For North vacancies contact Bernadette Nolan on 0161 238 4908 (evenings/weekends 0161 684 9556) Please write to ZMB North, Portland Tower, Portland Street, Manchester M1 3JZ. Confidential fax 0161 238 4910. E-mail bernadette.nolan@zaragroup.com

London Manchester Leeds Sydney New York Toronto Vancouver Calgary

LEGAL ADVISERS

Our client is the Monégasque services company of an international group whose main business is refining and marketing oil. It operates in fifteen countries in Europe and the Mediterranean Basin.

Monaco

communication (except at local levels) is conducted in English.

As a result of continuing business expansion, it now seeks to recruit two lawyers, each with up to three years' post-qualification experience to join the group's growing legal department. Complete fluency in at least one other European language (with a preference for Italian) is required as the positions will involve providing legal advice around the group. However, all intra-group

Successful candidates should be UK qualified. They should be able to demonstrate a good commercial background and a high level of ambition and drive, as well as initiative and the ability to work both individually and in a team environment. Some experience of intellectual property would be a distinct advantage and, although experience of the oil industry is not a pre-requisite, it is preferable. In addition, a keen sense of humour is essential! An excellent salary and benefits package will be offered.

Interviews for these roles will take place in London.

For details, please contact Sonya Rayner or Morwenna Lewis or send them a copy of your CV. You can e-mail them at sonyarayner@chambersrecruitment.co.uk.



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LATE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

CAPITAL MARKETS

To £50,000
This role is one for a lawyer who wants to work in a more entrepreneurial environment - you will take a consultative role, dealing in the main with banks and you must have a creative brain. You will certainly have a strong interest in international tax planning. If you do not have experience and will be 0-4 years' ppe. Ref T14181

INTERNATIONAL TAX PLANNING To £50,000
This role is one for a lawyer who wants to work in a more entrepreneurial environment - you will take a consultative role, dealing in the main with banks and you must have a creative brain. You will certainly have a strong interest in international tax planning. If you do not have experience and will be 0-4 years' ppe. Ref T14181

NON CONTENTIOUS CONSTRUCTION To £50,000
If you have 0-4 years' ppe and understand and have enthusiasm for the construction industry, this could be the role for you. A very varied client list of top calibre awaits you, as well as the opportunity to work directly with the partner who is responsible for the group. Ref T14181

LITIGATION To £50,000
This firm offers a wide ranging litigation practice - domestic and international arbitration, class actions, insolvency, fraud, as well as general commercial litigation - as well as a substantial team. All this yours if you have 2-4 years' litigation experience from a Top 10 firm. Ref T14182

CO/CO - SPANISH To £50,000
This blue-chip City firm with a global reputation in the corporate arena is looking to hire a UK qualified corporate lawyer with, ideally, 2-5 years' ppe to undertake a teaming workload with a Latin American focus. Fluent, or very good, Spanish is a pre-requisite. Ref T14183

US PROJECT FINANCE To £50,000
Leading US firm is seeking to hire project finance lawyers with 6-8 years' ppe from a leading City firm. The ideal candidate will be US/UK/Indian qualified with a demonstrated track record in client development. Lender related experience vital as is the willingness to spend time overseas. Ref T14184

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US PROJECT FINANCE To £50,000
Leading US firm is seeking to hire project finance lawyers with 6-8 years' ppe from a leading City firm. The ideal candidate will be US/UK/Indian qualified with a demonstrated track record in client development. Lender related experience vital as is the willingness to spend time overseas. Ref T14184

COMPANY/COMMERCIAL

To £50,000
You do not have to join the big boys for quality. International corporate work. This dynamic smaller firm will give a newly qualified corporate/commercial lawyer with French language skills the chance to work on some international mainstream corporate work. Ref T14185

COMPANY/COMMERCIAL To £50,000
You have a strong co/co background and a client friendly approach with 3-5 years' experience. What this firm is able to offer you is early partnership, a loyal and friendly team with an even mix in work between domestic and international matters, and an international practice that is working. Ref T14186

IT/TELECOMS To £70,000
The London office of this major US firm has the clients and is now bringing in the lawyers to create a quality IT/Telecoms practice to compete with the top city firms. High calibre IT/Telecoms lawyers with 2-5 years' ppe will find an unusually attractive package on offer. Ref T14187

CORPORATE FINANCE - GULF To £50,000 package
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For further information, in complete confidence, please contact:

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Television formats and copyright protection

Who owns One Man and His Dog? Peter McNerney and David Rose assess the rules

The BBC's decision to drop *One Man and His Dog* has raised hackles among the programme's devoted viewers and prompted several broadcasters, including BSkyB and Border Television, to explore the possibility of developing their own version.

To add to the controversy, the BBC announced that it owns the rights to the programme's format, which many might assume to be in the public domain. Consequently, any third party contemplating a programme with an identical or similar format would be obliged to pay the BBC.

Television format rights are an established commodity, but they are not recognised as such in English law. Significantly, copyright cannot protect concepts or ideas *per se*. It is only when they are expressed in a permanent form, for example in committing the format to writing or developing unique props or sets, that they can be given copyright protection as artistic works. Even if a format is expressed in writing, it can be difficult to protect by copyright unless it is scripted or at least capable of performance without reference to additional materials.

The late Hughie Green's failure to establish that the format of *Opportunity Knocks* was protected by copyright in New Zealand is often cited. Nor was he able to prove that there had been any passing-off because his show had never been seen in that country.

By contrast, where scripts are integral to the format, as with sitcoms and dramas, copyright will, in most cases, provide sufficient protection because it would be difficult to lift the storylines without infringing copyright in the scripts. Accordingly, when Granada decided to sell the format to its series *Cracker*, it licensed the right to use all its elements for the production of a new version which was broadcast worldwide as *Fitz*.

In the absence of copyright protection, broadcasters can protect format rights by other means. A confidentiality agreement will give some protection to a format creator, although



Robin Page and friend: can any television company run with the format of the BBC series he presents?

Important players are unwilling to sign such documents.

In the case of established formats, broadcasters can rely on the law of passing-off if they can prove that the viewing public is confused into believing that the new show is, in fact, the old show or has been licensed by the original owner. Passing-off is more likely where the stars, sets and name of the original programme have been reproduced intact.

The title of any programme can be protected as a registered trademark, a policy the BBC has adopted for some of its popular shows, such as *Radio 4's Just a Minute*.

Efforts have been made to give greater protection to format rights. In 1996 the Department of Trade and Industry issued a consultative paper on the subject which met limited interest. One of the principal concerns was that the UK is a net importer of formats and therefore the new protections were likely to benefit overseas producers and broadcasters rather than the domestic industry. Indeed, the legal position of format owners can be said to have worsened as a result of a recent case in which the owner of an original film entitled *Joy* featuring an innovative "jump-editing" technique was

unable to prevent an advertising agency from adopting a similar approach for its Guinness commercial.

Whether the BBC can do anything to prevent other television broadcasters from making a programme about sheepdog trials will depend on the BBC's existing legal rights and not any format rights as such. If no rights exist, then the commercial rate for the format, at least from a legal point of view, is zero.

● The authors are a partner and solicitor respectively at the City law firm of SJ Berwin & Co.

Lessons of Lawrence

An open letter to the Prime Minister

The inquiry and the report into the murder of Stephen Lawrence make uncomfortable reading. As a lawyer and an ardent campaigner for equal rights, I, as much as anyone, wish to see the system vindicated and show that, in the fullness of time, the system works for all.

However, the way in which the murder investigation of Stephen Lawrence was handled has severely undermined the confidence in our justice system and shaken public trust in the police. The facts do not reveal a reason to celebrate any victories. The inquiry report identifies myriad "fundamental errors in the investigation" marred by a combination of professional incompetence, institutional racism and failure of leadership by senior officers.

The implications of the case continue to be felt. Only last week readers of one tabloid newspaper were offered large cash rewards for supplying evidence leading to the conviction of Stephen Lawrence's alleged killers. Is it really acceptable to offer such rewards? Shock tactics of this type serve only to remind us of the depths to which this case has finally brought us.

Given the findings of the report, it is astonishing that it took a new Government to establish the inquiry to examine the failures. We are all indebted to Neville and Doreen Lawrence and their lawyers for their single-minded pursuit of justice against all the odds. They and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, are to be congratulated for taking the bold and courageous step to establish this inquiry. However, the challenge now facing you, Prime Minister, is to ensure that the lessons learnt are enduring ones and that the political will to tackle racism is sustained.

The investigation of the murder and the treatment of the Lawrence family were clear denials of their legitimate rights at a tragic time. This led to the great injustice of not recognising that the Lawrence family were themselves victims. There was a basic failure to recognise that racism is unacceptable behaviour in any domain—least of all in an institution intended to serve the public, regardless of ethnic credentials.

Many police officers responsible have escaped disciplinary actions because of technicalities and we are informed that they are now beyond reach. The case against those suspected of this heinous crime was never properly prepared and the suspects—other than in the failed private prosecution—continue to face trial only by media. In addition, Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, and senior officers failed soci-

ety as a whole by not using the internal inquiries to send a message against racism. They missed a golden opportunity to restore confidence in an institution so reliant on the trust of the general public to remain effective.

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner has decided to complete his term of office and use it to tackle racism in his force. His task is a difficult one. His challenge now is to restore both his personal credibility and the eroded reputation of his force on these issues within his remaining time in office. The need for him to deliver on both of these should not be underestimated.

This sad case is a classic example of Britain's failure to build equality into the mainstream culture of one of our most important institutions: the police. Yet the police are not alone in this. The report's definition of institutional racism is welcome, as is the acknowledgement that it exists within many of this country's powerful organisations.

One of my past roles as the European Commission's representative on racism and xenophobia showed me that Britain has been in the lead on race relations compared with the Continent. The record has been tarnished. It is now up to you, Mr Blair, to put it right. You have a reputation for boldness and "joined-up" thinking. I urge

you to use both to tackle racism, not just within the police, but in all our institutions, whether it be education, welfare, the NHS or Whitehall.

Your package of proposals of change must not be a superficial one restricted to changes in the law. I know from my five years' experience at the Equal Opportunities Commission that what really needs to change is the culture. This can be done only by a combination of leadership, sustained commitment from the top, training and retraining, regular monitoring coupled with clear, decisive and repeated disciplinary action to establish and maintain racial equality as a core value.

Above all, those in these institutions must now listen and truly understand what it means to be denied your rights or opportunities just because you are a different colour.

Only then can Britain aspire again to be a beacon on race equality and can you be remembered as a Prime Minister who truly made Britain a fairer, more equal society.

● The author formerly chaired the Equal Opportunities Commission and was the European Commission's representative on racism and xenophobia, 1994-97. She is now deputy vice-president of the Law Society, but the views expressed here are her own.



KAMLESH BAHL

Legal DIARY

WHO will take over as the top family law judge in England and Wales when Sir Stephen Brown retires in September? Bets are already being laid for the appointment, which could see a woman holding the most senior judicial post yet. Lady Justice Butler-Sloss is the senior of the contenders, who include Lords Justices Swinton Thomas, Ward and Thorpe.

Of course, the choice could come from outside the Family Division judges. One such name being bandied about is Lord Falconer of Thorornton, although sources close to the Lord Chancellor suggest that the Dome Minister remains an outsider for this judicial post.

□ Olswang, the media law firm that represented nearly all the national newspapers in their fight against Jack Straw's injunction, may find itself in court again—in pursuit of damages for the loss suffered by *The Sunday Telegraph*, which had to remove the story from later editions. Julia Palca, who led Olswang's team, says the Home Secretary's action was pointless, because "the matter was already in the public domain". Mr Straw might be forced to justify on public interest grounds why he sought the injunction.

□ The wheels of justice by tradition grind slowly. But the latest reform should

enter the record books for legal delays. The Lord Chancellor's Department has just announced that from April, Knightsbridge Crown Court will be changing its name to Blackfriars Crown Court to reflect its present location. When did the court move from being around the corner from Harrods? Six years ago.

□ City law firms have come out in favour of one-stop shopping. The City of London Law Society has replied in its submission to the Law Society consultation exercise that rules should be relaxed so that law firms can become subsidiaries of other professional-services firms, such as accountants.

□ How can people find a good divorce lawyer? Hard on the heels of the Law Society's new family law panel of specialist solicitors comes another scheme, this time from the Solicitors' Family Law Association. More than 1,300 lawyers have applied to join and the first accredited solicitors will be named in July.

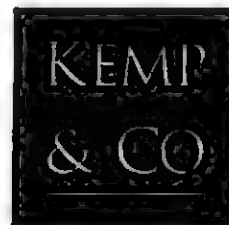
□ Solicitors are facing demands for tax they have already paid because the Inland Revenue is swamped with paperwork generated by the January 31 self-assessment deadline, says the accountancy firm Smith & Williamson. Colin Ives, a

partner, says that many tax statements sent out this week reflect underpayments although tax has been fully paid. "Watch out," he adds, "for the Revenue trying to impose non-negotiable interest penalties on any tax deemed not to have been held by it after this month."

□ A barrister specialising in information technology work at the law firm Tario Lyons has called on the Government to give businesses similar legislative protection to that enacted in Australia. A Millennium Compliance Bill is before Parliament, but without government backing, he says, it won't get far. "Every UK business could be a victim of year 2000 litigation instigated by US companies, yet they are being denied a similar remedy against US companies."

□ Judgments of the superior courts in Scotland will be put on the Internet, thanks to lobbying from the Society for Computers and the Law. The society's John Sibbald says that at last this will give "free access to this area of the law" and give the Scottish legal system a chance to compete in the global market for legal services.

□ The Solicitors Pro Bono Group has won a coup: it has persuaded the Attorney-General to encourage government lawyers to take up *pro bono* work. Keen lawyers will be put in touch with appropriate agencies. Details: 0171-929 5601



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* Finance Midlands Dealmakers Awards 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999

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THE TIMES LAW AWARDS 1998 with ONE ESSEX COURT

Access to justice: who pays?

First prize was awarded to Mike Thomas for his essay, below, on how high costs will hinder justice

The cost of civil justice is excessive. In claims of between £12,500 and £25,000, average costs range from 40 to 95 per cent of the claim value and in lower value claims the costs consistently represent more than 100 per cent of the claim value. Disproportionate costs are not only inefficient but also discriminate against those with fewer resources by deterring both the poor and the risk-averse from litigating. Making the ability to vindicate rights dependent upon wealth undermines equality before the law. The withdrawal of legal aid precipitates the problem of how the price of litigation undertaken by those with limited resources is to be paid, or more accurately "underwritten", since costs are payable only on defeat.

Conditional fees are the solution of Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, to the problem of funding access to justice. Under such an arrangement, the lawyer charges her client only if the case is won, and when cases are won a success fee is charged. However, even with conditional fees, the high costs payable in the event of a loss will continue to deter the poor and risk-averse from litigating. On losing, the client remains liable for all of her opponent's costs and her own disbursements. The proposals that the client insures against these costs encounters the problem that in a system of high and unpredictable costs insurance is commensurately expensive — it costs £8,000 to insure against bringing medical negligence claims to trial. Introducing a conditional fee system without reducing the cost of litigation merely



Winners: the overall victor was Mike Thomas, pictured between Lord Irvine, and Peter Stothard, Editor of The Times, and Anthony Grabiner, QC

transfers the problem of excessive costs deterring litigation from plaintiffs to their lawyers and achieves nothing. The success fee's function is to compensate the lawyer for those cases that he loses. In our system, costs are high, relative to the claim, so any success fee recovered, capped at 25 per cent of the award, will be small relative to the costs incurred. If costs equal three quarters of the value of the claim, then a lawyer, litigating similar claims must win three quarters of cases to "break even".

Unless the costs of litigation are reduced or lawyers are prepared to earn less, only very strong claims will obtain access to justice. Solicitors have already been advised that "conditional fee medical negligence work should not be touched with a bargepole". The acid test for conditional fees is not whether they work in cases where the risk of non-recovery is low (and the cost in legal aid has been small), but whether they can bring claims less certain of success into the

system. The bottom line is profit: the attractiveness of a case depends upon the potential fee on success balanced against the risk of non-recovery and the amount of investment necessary in bringing the claim. In America it seems that claims where success is not guaranteed are litigated but higher damages offer greater rewards. In our system lower awards make uncertain claims less attractive, especially those for smaller sums where the costs are increasingly disproportionate. To increase damages is inefficient, so to facilitate access to justice we must decrease the cost of litigation. The hourly rate will continue alongside conditional fees. Defence lawyers have obvious difficulties in operating conditional fee arrangements and will continue to work on hourly rates, as in America. Further, a plaintiff's ability to

come to court is fundamental to the rule of law and cannot be dependent upon her finding a lawyer prepared to work on a conditional fee basis. Justice is not concerned only with money; the vindication of rights has its own value. Money is not claimed — for example, applications for judicial review or actions to compel due administration of a trust — are less amenable to conditional fees. The costs of litigation must therefore be cut to enable those dependent on hourly fees to obtain access to justice. Conversely, only appropriate procedures must be allowed in order to prevent rich defendants gaining an unfair advantage by investing disproportionate amounts on an hourly rate while the plaintiff's lawyer is trying to work efficiently on a conditional fee basis.

The success fee compensates lawyers for representing unsuccessful plaintiffs, as the new price of access to justice, it raises the question of who should ultimately pay it. If success fees are deducted from damages, then successful plaintiffs are subsidising access to justice and the system is failing to provide full compensation and to protect rights fully. The Lord Chancellor accordingly proposes that success fees be recoverable as costs from the defendant. One contrary argument is that if the plaintiff chooses to opt for a conditional fee arrangement through impecuniosity such losses are not recoverable. Nevertheless, the Lord Chancellor's proposal is preferable: wrongs give rise to a duty to make full compensation and the plaintiff should receive this provided he acts reasonably in bringing his action. Those defendants wrongfully denying liability and forcing the plaintiff to litigate to recover his due should have to pay for the steps the plaintiff must reasonably take. Making

wrongdoers pay more also provides a greater deterrent to adhere to the norms of behaviour required by law. Further, it is better to give plaintiffs full compensation explicitly than to achieve this by distorting the law of damages to take account of irrecoverable costs, as is apparently practice in America. The expansion of conditional fee arrangements is inevitable and is to be welcomed as it encourages efficiency in order to secure a reasonable return for time invested. However, conditional fees can only succeed in securing access to justice if the costs of litigation are reduced and conditional fees alone will not achieve this. Until costs are reduced, many good cases will remain insufficiently attractive to be undertaken on a conditional fee basis, with the result that, where the taxpayer is unable to underwrite the price of access to justice, society will suffer the cost of individual rights and collective behavioural norms going unenforced.

Only very strong claims will be taken on

Words of praise from Irvine

The big prizes and a special award: Frances Gibb reports

The success of legal reforms in which lawyers can take on most disputes over money or damages on a "no win, no fee" basis depends on the cost of litigation being reduced, the Lord Chancellor said last week.

Lord Irvine of Lairg was quoting from the winning essay in the 1998 Times Law Awards competition, written by Mike Thomas, a student at University College, Oxford. Mr Thomas won the top prize of £3,000 from more than 150 entries in the competition, held with the One Essex Court chambers of Anthony Grabiner, QC.

Lord Irvine said that most of the shortlisted essays concentrated on how the availability of legal aid affected access to justice. But as the Minister responsible for delivering that access, he had to look at a broader picture, including the courts, judiciary and providers of legal services in the voluntary sector.

The Government's reforms went wider than legal aid. The first phase of its civil justice reform programme takes effect from April, Lord Irvine said. "These reforms will unify, simplify and speed up court procedures and protocols, to deliver justice directed towards the needs of court users," he added.

The reform was not just about a new set of rules. It would mean a new culture, where "proportionality is the key to pursuing just dispute resolution".

The reforms also demonstrated how wider costs than legal aid were involved. "Judges have been working through a demanding programme of training, to enable them to fulfil their unprecedented new case management responsibilities."

Lord Irvine, who presented the prizes at a reception at Lincoln's Inn, headed the judging team, which included Lord Browne-Wilkinson, the senior law lord, Mr Grabiner and Susanna Fitzgerald, a member of his chambers, and Peter Stothard, the Editor of The Times.

The topic for essays in this year's competition was Access to justice — who pays the price?

The second prize of £2,000 went to Sarah Palin, of West London, who is training to be a barrister at the Inns of Court School of Law, and the third prize of £1,000 to Suzanne Sava, a Romanian student studying law at the London School of Economics.

The three runners-up who received £250 each were David Lewis, Andrea Markham and Alastair Larkin. A special prize of £100 was awarded to Rachel Levene, 17, a pupil at Nottingham High School for Girls.

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For more information in complete confidence please contact Helen Bryant, Bryn Bowden or Tanya Foster (for private practice) at Sun B House (for in-house) and Julie Martin at GARFIELD ROBBINS, 5 WORMWOOD STREET, LONDON EC2M 1RD. Call Evenings/Weekends 0410 546 588 Confidential Fax 0171 417 1444. Email: helenb@garfieldrobbins.co.uk

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CHAMBERS

RUGBY LEAGUE

Wakefield banking on survival

By Christopher Irvine

THEY were taking the floodlights down at Belle Vue yesterday, which looked an ominous sign, but it was to replace old bulbs. Crumbling terraces are being patched up and Wakefield Trinity Wildcats, who qualify already as the biggest mouthful in the JJB Super League, are as ready as they can be for their re-entry to the top flight on Sunday.

The compromise of having two nicknames sums up the problem of being caught between the old and new at Wakefield, a founding member of the Northern Union in 1895. Do supporters shout for "Trinity", "Wildcats" or plain old "Wakey"? More worryingly, will there be a team to support after what is widely seen as a make-or-break season?

Andy Kelly, the Wakefield coach and one of the few recognisable faces left after an overhaul that is widely seen as a make-or-break season, said: "That's vital not only to the players and me as coach, but to the club's existence." Sainsbury's has faith. Yesterday, the supermarket chain announced a joint sponsorship over two years in a £600,000 deal with a local shopping centre.

Wakefield's fellow Super League clubs, who each receive £750,000 annually under their revised television contract, have left them to get on £575,000 from their former

first division colleagues and the Rugby Football League (RFL). Wakefield are at a further disadvantage. As things stand, they will receive no television income from 2000 if they remain in the Super League, a situation that highlights the difficulties associated with their promotion.

When the independent franchise panel granted Wakefield's application in November — their right after winning the 1998 first division championship — Super League clubs were not leaping for joy at the prospect of welcoming a club where time had stood still.

Wakefield's opening fixture is away to Castleford Tigers. The last time they met, at the height of the Super League mergers debacle in 1995, Castleford won by a record 86-0. It was proposed at the time that Wakefield, Castleford and Featherstone Rovers should amalgamate to form a team called Calder. It never materialised.

Work on Wakefield's proposed new 10,000-capacity stadium at Ossett could start in August, but, as one club official acknowledged, "relegation would set us back two years". Wakefield would have to bounce back immediately and, by then, the Super League could be a closed shop. It places a huge burden on finishing higher than fourteenth.

With experienced players such as Tony Kemp, signed from Leeds Rhinos, Kelly said: "We've gone for depth of character. Players who aren't averse to rolling their sleeves up." That summed up the Wildcats' Silk Cut Challenge Cup exit on Sunday. "Considering Bradford walked us by 60 points pre-season, we fought well for 70 minutes and lost 26-8," Kelly said. "That's progress in a short time. We'll only improve."

□ The Lincoln Financial Group is to continue its sponsorship of the Great Britain team in the inaugural Tri-Nations tournament against Australia and New Zealand this autumn.



Kelly: character

Throwing away a slice of history

David Powell on a rule change that threatens to erase the exploits of a cherished Olympian

Denise Lewis may just win the heptathlon world championship in Seville this summer. She may even register the highest score of the year, just as she did in 1998, when she won European and Commonwealth titles. If she does, the golden girl of British sport will have more reason than most to stay up until midnight on December 31 to celebrate the millennium.

When the clock strikes 12, Lewis could be the new world record-holder for her event. Whether she would consider it worthy of celebration will depend on how she views the insensitive decision by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) to wipe out Jackie Joyner-Kersey's existing world record at the end of the year.

This is not because, belatedly, Joyner-Kersey has been found guilty of any drugs offence. In the manner of Ben Johnson, after Johnson failed a drugs test at the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, he was not only stripped of the 100 metres gold medal and world record, but, one year later, the IAAF erased the world record that he had set at the 1987 world championships. Joyner-Kersey's record is being dropped for no better reason than a minor alteration to the specifications of the women's javelin.

This is not an unimportant world record, one of the many that are set today, forgotten tomorrow — it is one that was set at an Olympic Games 11 years ago by the most successful woman all-rounder the world has seen. "It is imprudent, although I suppose I could say idiotic, for track and field to remove from the record books one of its most cherished names," Craig Masback, the executive director of USA Track and Field, the sport's governing body in the United States, said.

The significance of the record was emphasised by the attitude of American television at the time. The final event, the 800 metres, was scheduled to take place 15



Joyner-Kersey, one of the greatest Olympic competitors of them all, prepares to throw the javelin on her way to rewriting the record books at Seoul in 1988

minutes after NBC went off air, but the channel decided to stay with the action to see if Joyner-Kersey could create history. She duly delivered a score of 7,291 points.

Performances with the new javelin, with the centre of gravity moved three centimetres forward to allow more regular landings on the tip, will be kept from April 1. The best mark by December 31 will become the new world record from January 1, 2000. The change to the javelin is likely to reduce distances achieved by the best heptath-

letes by a mere three to four metres, a loss of 50 to 60 points. Had Joyner-Kersey been using the new javelin in Seoul, she would still have scored more than 7,200 points.

As Richard Hymans, the joint-compiler of the IAAF book *Progression of World Best Performances and Official IAAF World Records*, said: "Quite clearly, there is no one around who can score over 7,000 points and yet somebody may be credited with a world record for an inferior performance." Lewis's

British record is 6,736 points and, while 7,000 may soon be within range, 7,200 may be beyond her this season.

Masback added: "The way it is being seen by the American public is that here you have one of track and field's all-time greats and some bureaucrats in Monaco have chosen, for their own purposes, to make it so that she is not a world record-holder."

USA Track and Field is planning a protest to the IAAF and, to understand its indignation, think back to Daley Thompson. How

'Someone may be credited with a record for an inferior performance'

would Great Britain have reaped if the same had happened to him? "The bizarre thing here is that Daley Thompson's record was not expunged when the men's javelin specification was changed in 1986," Hymans said. "The only argument I can think they might use is that, in the case of ten events, the proportional effect on the score would be that bit less than on seven events, which is a weak argument." Hymans favours the less drastic measure of revising Joyner-Kersey's score by downgrading old javelin marks by 5 per cent.

Nobody disagrees with the need for the new specification, implement and the move has done the women's javelin, as a single event, a huge favour. Rarely these days does a woman manage to throw beyond 70 metres, while the world record stands at 80 metres. That mark, set by Petra Felke in 1988, is one of several left over from the era of institutionalised drug-taking in East German sport.

Furthermore, it is among the records that have prompted Professor Helmut Digel, the German federation president, to set before the IAAF congress next summer a proposal calling for a clean slate on world records from January 2000. Carl Gustav Tollenaar, chairman of the IAAF technical committee, said that no other world record changes were under discussion — but insisted that the women's javelin had to be altered.

"The 600g javelin lands flat and it is hard for the judges to maintain a fair competition," Tollenaar said. "With the new javelin, the girls would not be able to break the world record. This makes it fair for today's girls."

But not fair for yesterday's girl. Joyner-Kersey finished second behind Lewis in the world rankings last year and has just retired. When she made that decision, little could she have imagined that her world record would go into retirement with her.

Athletes welcome English centres for elite

By John Goodbody

LEADING British competitors yesterday hailed the Government's launch of a £160 million regional network of sports facilities.

England will have ten centres, plus one in Sheffield for sports medicine and research, to help realise a projected tally of 41 medals for Great Britain, including eight gold, at the 2004 Olympic Games. The ten English centres are: Bath, Southampton, Crystal Palace, Bisham Abbey, Bedford, Loughborough/Nottingham, Lillishall, Sheffield, Manchester and Gateshead. Similar centres are being set up in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Paul Palmer, who won a swimming silver medal in the 400 metres freestyle at the Atlanta Games, is training already at Bath, where a training village was opened in 1997. He said: "Before, I was doing it despite the system, but at Bath the elite can get the necessary backing in physiology, psychology and sports medicine."

The network will be linked to the world-class performance programme, which has provided £30 million over the past 18 months to fund competitors. Speaking yesterday from Australia, where he is training, Darren Campbell, the European 100 metres champion, said: "The backing has enabled me to train full-time and helped me go the European championships last year in the best shape I could be."

The facilities, funded by the National Lottery, will allow competitors to train close to their homes, rather than many of them living at one enormous site, as had been envisaged by John Major, when he announced the scheme in 1995.

However, the Conservative party said yesterday that the announcement was a "classic example of too little, too late". Peter Ainsworth, the Shadow Culture Secretary, said: "We are not hankering after the original vision. However, so much time has passed and the announcement will be of no value before the next Olympics. This is a national project to win gold medals. The Government has a key role to play, but there is no direction and leadership."

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THE PIER TOKEN 3

CHANGING TIMES

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

In the United States they take the matter of masterpoints (those little pieces of paper you win when you do well in duplicate tournaments) rather more seriously than we do over here. Paul Soloway, one of the top American players, has recently achieved the notable milestone of 50,000 masterpoints, the first person in the history of the American game to do so. Soloway, a bridge professional, is an outstanding player and has recently started up a partnership with world number one, Bob Hamman. So far everything they have touched has turned to gold and apparently Soloway has not yet learned Hamman's system.

Over the next three days I will feature some fine plays by Soloway:

Dealer West	N-S game	Teams
♠ 3 ♥ 10 2 ♦ K 10 8 6 5 ♣ A Q 10 9 8	♠ Q 9 7 ♥ J 7 6 5 4 3 ♦ J 5 ♣ K 7	♠ 10 8 6 5 2 ♥ Q 8 ♦ A 7 2 ♣ 5 2

Contract: Five Clubs by South. Lead: two of clubs.

The play in Five Clubs on a spade lead would be challenging. A careful declarer would draw trumps and then play off the hearts first in order to get a count of the side-suits. On this occasion he would discover that West had three diamonds to East's two and would thus play West to hold the jack.

Soloway actually got a trump lead, however, and this gave him an alternative line of play. Taking the view that the lead marked East with the king of clubs, Soloway rose with the ace and eliminated both major suits before exiting with a second trump. East won his king of clubs and had to open up diamonds or concede a ruff and discard.

Even if East had had a trump to exit with after taking his king, Soloway would have not been in a worse position than the other declarers — but a singleton trump is not often an attractive opening lead.

□ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

ABA
a. The Phoenician alphabet
b. An extinct desert bird
c. A sack

GABOON
a. A small baboon
b. A forestall
c. A wood

BURTON
a. A hat
b. Stowage of luggage
c. A Western pistol

GALERE
a. A kitchen range
b. A cotter
c. A breed of carthorse

Answers on page 49

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Chasing pack

Garry Kasparov, the world champion, enjoys a half-point lead over the chasing pack of Anand and Kramnik in the elite tournament at Linares in Spain. Both of these fine players have now opened their stores with victories against Peter Svidler and Michael Adams. I give these games today. White: Viswanathan Anand; Black: Peter Svidler; Linares 1999

Grünfeld Defence

1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	e5
3. Nc3	d5
4. Nf3	Bg7
5. Qb3	exd4
6. Qxc4	O-O
7. e4	e6
8. e5	b5
9. Qb3	Nb7
10. h4	c5
11. e6	O-O
12. Qd1	Nb6
13. exf7+	Rxf7
14. N5	Nc6
15. h5	h6
16. Bc3	Bf5
17. Ng5	Rf6
18. g4	Be6
19. Ne4	Bd5
20. Qd2	Rd6
21. f3	Bxe4
22. fxe4	Nd7
23. Qh2	Nf8
24. e5	Rd7
25. Ne6	Qe5+
26. Bc2	Nee5
27. Be2	c3
28. Bxc3	b4
29. Ng7	bxc3
30. Qh6+	Nf7
31. Rf1+	Black resigns

White: Vladimir Kramnik; Black: Michael Adams; Linares 1999

Nimzo-Indian Defence

1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	e6
3. Nc3	Bb4

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Marziano Van der Werf, Porto San Giorgio 1998. White's pieces find themselves in a cluster on the queenside, well away from the defence of his king. Unsurprisingly, Black now delivered a quick checkmate. Can you see how? Solution on page 49



Anelka swerves past Given and scores Arsenal's only goal at St James' Park on Sunday. In his present form, how can any Fantasy League manager be without him?

Pearce locates target to hammer his point home

On previous FA Cup weekends, the small number of matches affecting *The Times* Fantasy League has not made it worthwhile to award weekly or ON-Target prizes. This week, however, a total of six FA Cup Premier League games are being played, so there will be no "rollover" of prizes to the following week.

Today we announce the winner of the prize of £1,000 plus £100 worth of Puma sports equipment awarded to the Fantasy manager of the month, in addition to the £500 prize for the team of the week (opposite). Our aim, misguided perhaps, is to give our Fantasy player of the week award to a different player each week. The logic behind this decision is that readers of these pages probably know all they need to about stars such as Dwight Yorke, Nicolas Anelka and Andy Cole, whose regular high scoring means they are often candidates for the award; therefore we prefer to draw their attention to other, lesser-known names who might be worth a place in their Fantasy teams.

Occasionally, we permit ourselves a smug smile as one of our previous winners comes up with another sparkling seven days on Saturday, for example, George Boateng, the Coventry City midfielder player, our award-winner a while ago, scored twice in his team's 4-1 away win over Aston Villa.

His team-mate, John Aloisi, also netted twice, and was considered for this week's title, but his first-team appearances tend to be limited, so we have picked another relatively unsung hero who is first choice for his club.

This steady central defender is one of only two players at Upton Park to hold an FA Cup Premier League winner's medal (Ian Wright, formerly with Arsenal, is the other), earned when he was in the Blackburn Rovers squad that took the title in 1995. On Saturday, Ian Pearce (for it is he) scored against his former employers, and helped keep them out at the other end, to earn six Fantasy League points.



Pearce is not a consistent goalscorer: all the more remarkable, then, that Saturday's was the second West Ham home game in succession in which he has appeared at the far post to score on open play. Against Nottingham Forest a fortnight ago, he volleyed in a Frank Lampard cross from the left, and against Blackburn, met a far post cross from Paolo Di Canio on the right to send a header past John Folan. When Rovers launched their comeback attempt in the second half, he stood firm in his usual position on the right of the back three.

Pearce began his career with Chelsea and made four appearances as substitute before joining Blackburn for £300,000 in 1993. Almost four years later, his value

had increased to £1,600,000 when he arrived at Upton Park, but that still represents a bargain buy by Harry Redknapp, the West Ham manager, who has seen the reliable Pearce help his side into contention for European qualification. Inflation and his consistent level of performance in a winning team means that he will cost you £3.1 million, but for your money you are getting a sound defender who has, it seems, discovered where the goal is.

For legal reasons, *The Times* Fantasy League is no longer able to accept entries from players under 18 years of age. Players 17 years and under already registered in the main and youth leagues will, however, be allowed to remain in the competition.

PRIZES

- £50,000 to the top Fantasy League manager, plus a trip for two to the European Cup final
- £20,000 to the runner-up
- £5,000 for third place
- £2,000 monthly prizes: eight prizes of £1,000, plus £300 of Puma sports equipment
- £500 weekly prizes: 36 prizes of £500, plus £100 of Puma sports equipment
- £1,000 youth prize, plus monthly prizes of a Premiership football shirt
- £500 weekly On-Target prize

HOW TO ENTER YOUR FANTASY LEAGUE TEAM

Select a team of 21 Premiership players from those listed right. The total value of your team must not exceed £50m and you cannot choose more than one player from the same Premiership club. Your team must be in a 4-4-2 formation with: one goalkeeper; two full-backs; two centre-backs; four midfielders; and two forwards.

TO ENTER BY POST Name your team on the entry form, left, in no more than 16 characters. Enter the correct three-digit player codes from the list, right, followed by the players' names. Enter the first three characters of each player's team under the heading CLUB, ie, LEE for Leeds. Also enter the value of each player shown on the list right. Add up the values of the 11 players in your

team and make sure the total does not exceed £50m. Send your entry to the address shown, with a cheque/PO for £2.50 (£10 sterling outside UK or ROI) or your credit-card details. You will get confirmation of your team and your personal identity number (PIN) on receipt of your entry form. Readers under 18 should seek parental permission before entering. They must state their date of birth and indicate if they wish to enter our Youth League.

LUCKY DIP If you would like to select a team at random for you, please tick the Lucky Dip box on the entry form. Postal entries only. **TO ENTER BY PHONE** Call 0640 67 88 99 (+44 870 901 4209 outside the UK) using a touch-

tone (DTMF) phone and when prompted tap in your 11 three-digit player codes. You will be asked to give the name of your team (no more than 16 characters). You will then be given a 10-digit PIN, make sure you write this down and keep it safe to be able to check your team's progress and make transfers. Calls last about seven minutes. 0640 calls are 60p per minute. Calls from outside the UK are charged at national rates. Calls from payphones cost approximately double.



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THE TIMES MAIN FANTASY LEAGUE ENTRY FORM

Submit your entry as soon as possible to maximise your point-scoring opportunities

FANTASY TEAM NAME (up to 16 characters) _____

LUCKY DIP? If you wish to have your team selected by us at random, tick box ☐

CODE GOALKEEPER NAME CLUB VALUE

CODE FULL-BACK NAME CLUB VALUE

CODE CENTRE-BACK NAME CLUB VALUE

CODE MIDFIELDER NAME CLUB VALUE

CODE MIDFIELDER NAME CLUB VALUE

CODE MIDFIELDER NAME CLUB VALUE

CODE FORWARD NAME CLUB VALUE

CODE FORWARD NAME CLUB VALUE

MAXIMUM OF ONE PLAYER PER PREMIERSHIP TEAM TOTAL VALUE (MAX £50m) £ _____

I also wish to enter the Youth League (please tick) ☐

I was under 18 on August 15, 1998. Date of birth _____

First Name _____ Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Daytime tel _____

Cheque/PO no (payable to: Times Newspapers Ltd) _____

Credit card number: _____ Expiry date: _____

MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Name on card _____

Supply address of registered cardholder on separate sheet if different from above. Signature _____

Send with £2.50 entry fee (£10 sterling for entrants outside the UK or ROI) to: The Times Fantasy League, Alcester House, Dudley St, Luton, Beds LU1 1ZZ

1. On which days do you usually buy *The Times*? ☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday ☐ Don't usually buy *The Times*

2. When other national daily newspaper(s) do you buy at least once a week? _____

3. Which Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy at least once a week? _____

4. Which Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy quite often (1-2 copies per month)? _____

If you do not wish to receive other offers from Times Newspapers Limited, please tick box ☐

As I was saying

Not much of a week coming up, is it? What do you mean? Well, the FA Cup sixth round is being played this weekend, so there isn't a lot happening on the Fantasy front.

I disagree. There may only be three FA Cup Premier League games on Saturday, but plenty is going on in midweek. Hmm, I'd overlooked that. What games are on, then? Apart from last night's Leicester versus Leeds game, which counts

towards next week's scores, there's Tottenham against Southampton tonight, and Sheffield Wednesday against Wimbledon tomorrow. And Leicester, Southampton and Wimbledon play again on Saturday. Exactly. So if any of those teams manage two wins, or get two clean sheets in the case of their defenders, there's a chance for some good Fantasy League scores.

And somehow I get the feeling that there might be a very clean sheet indeed at Wimbledon v Leicester on Saturday. You never know. Who would have predicted Coventry winning 4-1 away to Villa? It might be a goal frast.

I should think there's more chance of goals in West Ham's game away to Southampton.

For Southampton, perhaps. They've done well in that fixture recently, and Southampton have been having a good run at home.

But won't they be tired after two games in a week? And the Leicester and Wimbledon players? Since those two play each other, that should cancel itself out.

That leaves one other game, by my reckoning. Who's playing? Ah, now that's a big game: Coventry at home to Charlton. A real relegation six-pointer.

Coventry to walk it? Don't be too sure. Charlton have gone four games without conceding a goal. But is there anyone in any of these teams that I should be looking to sign?

On form, Charlton defenders. Someone like Carl Tiller goes up for set-pieces, and he came very close to a goal against Forest at the weekend. He should be good for three points at least at Highbury Road.

So let me get this straight: you're making a prediction about Coventry, whose last result you admitted was completely unpredictable? Funny game, Fantasy Football.



CHOOSE YOUR PLAYERS FROM HERE

Columns show: code, name, club, weekly points, total points, value(m)

GOALKEEPERS

CODE	NAME	CLUB	WEEKLY	TOTAL	VALUE
102	B. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
103	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
104	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
105	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
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108	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
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200	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2

FULL BACKS

201	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
202	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
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279	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
280	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
281	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2
282	M. Smeaton	ARS	28	37	1.2

Anelka shoots his way to the top

The Arsenal forward appears unstoppable, but Charlton have started a revival that could have aided Fantasy League managers

If one were to select a player and a team of the month for February, there would be few arguments with the choices of Nicolas Anelka, of Arsenal, as the outstanding individual, and Charlton Athletic as the team.

After a disastrous run of results that included eight defeats in succession, Charlton won three games out of four in February and did not concede a goal — equalling their best spell in the top division since the days of Sam Bartram.

Anelka had the sort of month that most players can only dream about, eclipsing even the likes of Dwight Yorke in his goalscoring; indeed, when the two went head-to-head at Old Trafford, it was Anelka who put his side ahead with an angled shot into the roof of the Stretford End net over a sprawling Peter Schmeichel, while Yorke was unable to score, seeing a late effort saved by David Seaman.

Anelka's two most memorable goals of the month, scored for France against England at Wembley, do not, of course, count towards his Fantasy League score, but there were plenty of others: the three against Leicester City at Highbury, for instance.

Anelka, however, was not the first name on the list when this month's winning Fantasy League team, Zia's Passion, was being chosen by Zia Chaudhry, of Berkshire.

Mr Chaudhry, who lives in Slough and is studying Information Technology at Langley College, supports Liverpool, and chose Michael Owen ahead of the Arsenal man. Nevertheless, Anelka was soon pencilled in, "for his shooting power and skill".

With Mr Chaudhry's team finishing the month only four points ahead of the field, the contributions of two midfield players, Dietmar Hamann, of Newcastle United, who scored the equaliser against Arsenal at St James' Park on Sunday, and George Boateng, who gained six Fantasy League points in Coventry City's 4-1 win over Aston Villa, were important.

The selection of big-money players further forward meant that there was little left over to spend on defenders, which turned out to be a blessing in disguise. A bargain buy, Chris Powell, who cost only £2.7 million, was part of an impenetrable Charlton defence in the victories against Wimbledon, Liverpool and Derby County. Powell's previous club, and the draw with Nottingham Forest last Saturday.

Powell, the former Southend United left back who arrived at The Valley from Pride Park last summer for a Charlton club record fee of



MONTHLY WINNER

ZIA'S PASSION	
S. Hisslop (WES)	4
A. Hisslop (SHR)	7
C. Powell (CHA)	14
M. Desailly (CHE)	5
J. Stam (MAN)	6
M. Izet (LEI)	0
O. Dacourt (EVE)	0
D. Hamann (NEW)	8
G. Boateng (COV)	6
N. Anelka (ARS)	13
M. Owen (LIV)	11
TOTAL POINTS: 77	

£825,000, contributed 14 points to Mr Chaudhry's total of 77, winning him £1,000 plus £100 worth of sports equipment — a nice birthday present. If it did arrive two weeks early.

"I spent a lot of money on Anelka, Owen and some expensive midfield players, so I went for a cheap defender and I came up with him," Mr Chaudhry said.

Powell was also a member of the weekly winners, Twig's Team, chosen by Chris Meekings, of Gloucester. Mr Meekings is a supporter of Coventry City, and was delighted to see Boateng score twice at Villa Park, the six points being the largest single contribution to his team's score of 28, for which he wins £500 and £100 worth of sports equipment.

Originally, the Coventry representative in Mr Meekings' team was Dion Dublin, but a double transfer in October saw Dublin and Ian Taylor exchanged for Boateng and Yorke. Yorke was the team's second-highest scorer this week with 5, thanks to a goal and an assist against Southampton, while four other players scored three: Rio Ferdinand, Frank Leboucq, Hamann and Efan Ekoku.



After more than five seasons of keeping them out for Blackburn Rovers and West Ham United, Ian Pearce has suddenly discovered the knack of knocking them in at the other end. On Saturday, his old mates from Ewood Park found out for themselves as Pearce scored six Fantasy League points

FANTASY LEAGUE TOP 100

1	Paul Clarke	Shabod United	319
2	Sarabjit Kohli	Junglemen	305
3	Mark Coles	Joe Public	304
4	James Kerr	Serious Squad	303
5	Robert Little	Broken Arrow	302
6	Michael Metelitschuk	Banditos Darsene	298
7	Tim Gardner	Hatchester Who?	296
8	John Leithouse	Sold At The Bar	295
9	Gordon Croxall	Super Saddlers B	294
10	David Young	Dave 10	294
11	John Humphreys	Academicals	294
12	Peter Leathes	Spike Town	294
13	Mike Truman	Tiger United	293
14	David Wise	Walsall Reserves	292
15	Robin Harrington	Chequers Champs	292
16	Robert Anderson	Robert's Rovers	292
17	Richard Deane	On The Wagon	291
18	Andrew James Spencer	This One's Mine	291
19	Phil Tucker	Peter 7	291
20	Lucy Crestwaite	I Hate Football	290
21	Mike Shipley	Minor Thrill	289
22	Paul Tait	Pin-Ups 1	289
23	Carol Flint	The Baggage Boys	289
24	John White	Fusegear	288
25	Mark Copley	Third Time Lucky	288
26	David Edmondson	Edmo Utd Mington	288
27	Jennifer Cockburn	Yeah Right	288
28	David Head	In The City	288
29	Jason Wyne	Taffys Terrors	287
30	Nail Broadbent	Chapetown Elite	287
31	Kevin Styles	Owenston John	286
32	Alan Featherstone	Lafordysys Team	285
33	Henry Cosgrove	Top Class Reject	284
34	John Green	Chicken Chasers	284
35	Paul Hinch	Neilson Hosurs	284
36	David Tilley	Tilley FC	284
37	Henrietta Ball	Henri & Goals UU	284
38	Don Don Don	Man(oy) United	283
39	Colin Head	Headstart Gunard	283
40	Ian Anderson	The Old Squad	283
41	Paul O'Neill	Four Four Two	283
42	G. Sharpe	Sunfish Stars	282
43	John Minter	Mcodymaka	282
44	Joseph Barker	Jorn United	281
45	Don Bacher	Don's Diamonds	281
46	Mike Shipley	Minor Threat 16	281
47	Mike Shipley	Minor Threat 10	281
48	Seamus Trup	Winners	281
49	Brian Payne	Cosmopolitan 11	280
50	Pritish Gadhia	Willesden Eleven	280
51	Darren Sawyer	TrichyStars	280
52	Mike Amler	Mill Stars	280
53	Matthew O'Neil	The M Team	280
54	Scott's Stars	Scott's Stars	280
55	Terry Butler	El Ter's Revenge	280
56	Tony Filler	Real Datanam	280
57	Armand Popat	Popat's Army	280
58	Ruby Kodder	Materiallagers	280
59	Ben Allport	Oxolones	279
60	Andy Gough	Misty's Magic Te	279
61	James Macrae	James Macrae's	279
62	Peter Donnelly	Goals 'R Us	279
63	Tom Summers	Ganichou	279
64	Edin Campbell	Garys Hall	278
65	Alan Purdy	Als Bands	278
66	Mike Martin	Holyump Yagier	278
67	Nigel Rake	Kids Kings 9	278
68	Michael Scott	Aldouschips	278
69	Nigel Byrne	Nigel's Team	278
70	David Walker	Just A Second FC	277
71	Tom Lee	The Bears FC	277
72	Andy Laidlaw	Carlisle B	277
73	David Ball	Utility Team	277
74	Tony Green	Big Bad Mohs 11	276
75	Paul Smith	Ed Coboy	276
76	Philip Martin	Sid Vani	276
77	Stephen Anthony	Amthill Mob FC	276
78	Adam Fletcher	Red Or Dead	275
79	Charles Deane	Alans Striders	275
80	Kevin Calverhouse	Kevin's Kings	275
81	Andrew Kavanagh	Super Snipers FC	275
82	J. Pringle	Grand Pan Plaza	275
83	Jon Singh	Star City 442	275
84	Paul Kibbie	Clausentum Town	275
85	Donald Gable	Don's Damons	275
86	David Bailey	The Daisy XI	275
87	I. Samuels	Georak Mosley	275
88	Brian Hightdale	Dons's Deans FC	274
89	Christopher Vaneas	Nedlin's Army	274
90	Seamus Booth	Manchester City	274
91	Claire Barber	Mighty Terrors	274
92	Jonathan Hayes	Special Brew	274
93	Seamus Cleary	Super Spurs	274
94	Chris Coles	Midway FC	274
95	Geoff Clarke	Enter Radioch	274
96	Nicholas Fennell	Wally's Wonders 2	274
97	D. B. Fisher	Charles's Kickers	274
98	Bradley Woodbridge	Filmsfour	274
99	Andrew P. Hoell	Taking Candy	274
100	Richard Brownhill	The Business	274
	Steve Wootton	Shortsaw	274
	George Wellington	Rye Plant	274
		Wootton's Winners	274
		Survivors 6	274

Playing like Forest? Take heart and seek out the £500 prize

It may be closer to the end of the season than the beginning, but Fantasy League prizes remain up for grabs with ON-Target

Congratulations to Andrew Clarke, of Guildford, the main winner of ON-Target this week, who finds himself £500 richer and possessor of an EA Sports Pack. Fourteen other managers have also managed to win themselves excellent prizes.

Even if you do not have a Fantasy League team, you can enter this new game now — or enter a new one simply for ON-Target. All managers have the chance to win a share of £28,000 of new prizes. The Times has teamed up with EA Sports to offer you the chance to own the renowned FIFA 99 game. Every week you have the chance to win:

■ 1st Prize: £500 plus an EA Sports Pack
■ 4 runners up: EA Sports Packs
■ 10 additional runners up: FIFA 99 CD-Rom. Each EA Sports Pack contains: FIFA 99 for the PlayStation; FIFA 99 for the PC; EA Sports T-Shirt, key ring and mini football plus a record bag.

If YOU already have a team in the main game, then you're ready to play ON-Target. Simply check your Fantasy League players' score each week and see if their total is the same as our ON-Target score shown here each Tuesday. If you have scored the exact target points, a quick call to our ON-Target winners' line (national rate call) will put you in the draw to win one of the 15 prizes.

The ON-Target score may be high or low. There could be more than one score (such as today). It could be a minus score. So it's worth checking your performance every week.

Just have your PIN handy to call the winners line on:

THIS WEEK'S ON-TARGET SCORE

Has your team scored...

-1 or 5
points?

Check your total, then ring
0870 901 4270
(ex UK +44 870 901 4270)

Calls charged at national rates



If you don't have a team, or want to sign up another one, enter now by filling in the entry form. There are no limits to how many teams you enter. Not only could you win the ON-Target prizes, but you could claim the main game weekly (£500) or monthly (£1,000) prizes.

HOW TO ENTER: Look up your players' weekly point scores opposite and add them up, or call the check-line 0640 625 102. If your total score for this week matches the ON-Target number(s), then call our claim line on 0870 901 4270 (calls charged at national rate, should last

about a minute). Claims must be made before midnight on Sunday night. The lines then close until the next game starts on Tuesday morning.

If you have scored the correct number of points and called the claim line, you go into the draw. Just look in the paper on the following Tuesday to see if you have won.

Managers with the correct points who have not called the claim line will not be entered. Calls that are incomplete, inaudible or invalid will not be entered. All teams in the draw must conform to the main game rules.

Winners
This week's winners are: Andrew Clarke of Guildford (£500 plus EA Sports Pack); D. Nash of Newcastle; Ross Mitchell of Kirkcaldy; Steven Cheek of Watford; Kate Daniels of Bury St Edmunds (EA Sports Pack); L. Barna of Hampton; T. Denon of Tunbridge Wells; John Mackintosh of Leiston, Suffolk; David Storer of Witley; A. Cummins of Liverpool; T. O'Brien of London N12; B. Deer of Weston-super-Mare; John Fehrl of The Wirral; I. Townsend of Hereford; Hemmipost and David Deller of Colwyn Bay (FIFA 99 CD-Roms).



FANTASY LEAGUE QUIZ



Every week, we test your football knowledge in our Fantasy Quiz.

Last week, we showed you the four players whose names and numbers would add most to the price of a replica shirt: two numerals each, plus the 12 or 13 letters in the names of Nicolas Alexanderson (26), Pierre van Hooijdonk (40), Arner Gunnlaugsson (13) and Chris Bart-Williams (11). How much for a hyphen, by the way?

What do this week's four upwardly-mobile players have in common?



CHECK YOUR SCORES

TELEPHONE 0640 62 51 02

YOUTH LEAGUE TOP 10

1	Sarabjit Kohli	Junglemen	305
2	Robert Anderson	Robert's Rovers	292
3	Henrietta Ball	Henri & Goals UU	284
4	Matthew O'Neil	The M Team	280
5	Jwalant Popat	Popat's Army	280
6	Tom Summers	Ganichou	279
7	Graham Booth	Manchester City	274
8	Claire Barber	Super Spurs	274
9	Daniel Lewis	It's A Puppet	273
10	Daisy Martin	Saxham Tuesdays	273



Lampard, centre, gained six points for Junglemen during February

Bargains in midfield proving vital

MANAGERS in The Times Fantasy League seem to have varying opinions regarding the importance of their midfield. Many less experienced campaigners tend to pack their midfield with a wealth of talent, often with the likes of Beckham, Overmars and McManaman juxtaposed on their team sheet.

With a limited budget available, they are restricted to a patched-up strike force with the hope that their forwards will occasionally get themselves on the scoresheet. However, based on the evidence of the midfield statistics so far this season, it appears that this is not a wise move.

Gone are the days when Matthew Le Tissier was capable of 90 points a season; this season it has proved more

advantageous to concentrate on quality in other positions and select bargains in midfield in the hope that they pick up an assist here and there.

This can be demonstrated by the spread of points gained by players in the various positions. Goalkeeping tallies vary from 28 (Seaman and De Coey) to a miserable minus 24 (Beasant) producing a spread

of 52 points over the goalkeeping classification. Similarly, the spread in the full back category is 48 and in the centre back department, 57 points.

However, the top-scoring midfield player, Scholes, has just 31 points and as it is not possible for midfield players to score minus points, the spread of points for midfield players is only 31 — significantly lower than in other positions.

In addition to the budget constraint, managers are also restricted to purchasing one player from each Premiership club, so by having Overmars in your side, you are denied the services of a much sought-after Arsenal defender.

There are midfield players out there who are perfectly capable of accumulating a

respectable points tally without costing the Earth, who also play for a lower-profile team, thus benefiting your side in two ways.

Benito Carbone, of Sheffield Wednesday, Noel Whelan, of Coventry City, Darren Anderton, of Tottenham Hotspur, and Harry Kewell, of Leeds United, have all accumulated more than 20 points so far and will save you more than £1 million over the bigger names in midfield. For an even bigger saving, Frank Lampard, of West Ham United, Temuri Ketsbaia, of Newcastle United, and Peter Rudi, of Sheffield Wednesday, should also be considered in order to obtain funds to strengthen the defence and attack.

MATT SIMS

FOOTBALL

United keep their focus as Inter rule out Ronaldo

By STEPHEN WOOD

IF IT is a smokescreen, they are themselves in danger of losing sight of the bigger picture. Internazionale, who face Manchester United in the first leg of their European Cup quarter-final tie at Old Trafford tomorrow, insist that Ronaldo is unfit and will not be with team when they fly into Great Britain today.

The Brazil striker has not fully recovered from a long-term knee injury and, if he visits Manchester at all, it is believed that he will arrive on a private jet with Massimo Moratti, the Inter president, tomorrow. Officials of the Milan club said yesterday that Ronaldo is "99 per cent certain" to miss the match.

However, there have been conflicting signals with every new day and United refuse to be fooled by what could amount to an elaborate mind game. Alex Ferguson, the United manager, knows that it will be to the benefit of his team if Inter get themselves preoccupied over Ronaldo. It

is also increasingly clear that United believe that they can overcome Inter whether he turns up or not.

Ferguson oversaw a lively practice session at The Cliff, the club's training headquarters, yesterday, watched by a large number of supporters. The workout finished with a proper match, giving the on-lookers a glimpse of the final XI that will be entrusted with exploiting Inter's indifferent form. Barring last-minute disasters, United will field a full-strength side and, for once, there is no need for Ferguson to indulge in any mental kidoogy of his own.

Roy Keane, the United captain, spoke for all his teammates when he said: "We're not afraid of any team, anywhere. We began to take a closer look at Inter in training yesterday, but you can look at the opposition too much. We are concentrating on our strengths and we'll let them do the worrying."

His words suggest that the

circumspection that enveloped the last appearance by United in the quarter-finals has been erased. Then, against AS Monaco last season, they were undone by virtue of the away goals rule.

"A win at home tomorrow is vital," Keane said. "We must not concede any goals, either. Italian teams are very good at coming to places and nicking one precious goal."

Inter believe that they can trouble the central defensive pairing of Jaap Stam and Ronny Johnsen. At training yesterday, Steve McClaren, the United first-team coach, emphasised the need for containment in a separate discussion with the defenders and the central midfield partnership of Keane and Scholes.

Edgar Davids, the Juventus midfielder, also spoke out on behalf of Stam, his teammate in the Holland national side. "It is laughable if I later think that Jaap is slow," Davids said. "He has got the quality to cope with whatever they throw at him."

Ferguson has received a report on every Inter match since the draw for the quarter-finals was made, but he will urge his players to concentrate on their own game. He said: "We must learn from our experiences in previous European ties, about the dangers of counter-attacking and relaxing at crucial moments. Nor can we be overawed by the qualities that Inter present."

So important is this tie that the local newspaper in Manchester has brought out a souvenir supplement this week, detailing United's "glorious" European campaigns. Alas, it serves only to underline how inglorious most of them have been, but it is an anomaly that, to judge by the confidence around Manchester yesterday, the present players feel they can finally eradicate.



Latin giants eye silverware

By Rob Hughes

Form, or facade? There is little kidology time left for coaches to indulge in before the European cup competitions resume over the next three nights.

Those messengers who marched up to Internazionale's Alpine camp and came down with confused information about the state of Ronaldo's knee were just the advance party. Right across the boundaries of the Uefa Cup, the European Cup and the Cup Winners' Cup there are high quality sides whose recent league performances would appear to have been designed to mislead, or have been the consequence of sudden chance in management.

Italy and Spain will have a significant say, again, in the destination of the silverware yet between the last round and the quarter-finals, four clubs — Real Madrid and Juventus, who contested the last European Cup final, plus Internazionale and Atlético Madrid — have dispensed with their coaches in an effort to make the players play.

These are big clubs living for the moment. They spend, sometimes more than they can afford, to amass resources capable of winning European tournaments and, on the eve

of the knockout stage that brings such a welcome authenticity to cup football, they panic. It is a short-term fix. Of the new trainers — Mircea Lucescu at Inter, John Toshack at Real Madrid, Carlos Aguiar at Atlético and Carlo Ancelotti at Juventus — only Ancelotti knows that he will be in charge next season. The rest are temporary and millionaire players, like irresponsible schoolboys, become lazy when the headmaster watching over them is not permanent.

We should not trust their league form and we must remember, for example, that the Real squad for the match against Dynamo Kiev is virtually the same as that which won the European Cup last May and the World Club Cup in Tokyo in December. If Toshack gets the motivation right, he could be five games from glory.

At Inter, Lucchesa (keeping the managerial seat warm for

Marcello Lippi) has run into resentment among the staff, not least Taribo West, of Nigeria. However, even without Ronaldo, they have big-match winners in Roberto Baggio and Ivan Zamorano and while Inter's vulnerability down the flanks is well detailed, they have conceded the

fewest goals — live — in Europe so far, in comparison with with Manchester United's 11.

Indeed, keeping the first leg tight is a virtue that has brought Italy 13 European trophies, including four European

Cups, in the Nineties. The country has chances to win all three tournaments this year — with Inter or Juventus in the main event, Parma, AS Roma and Bologna in the UEFA Cup, tonight and Lazio, the Serie A leaders, in the Cup Winners' Cup on Thursday.

According to Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, the Italians are professional

Then there is the Kiev, Valer Lobanovski, the old fox, says his Dynamo side cut down by Juventus last year when, as usual, the harsh winter had deprived his squad of match fitness and, as usual, Kiev had old players.

This time, it is different. Kley have sold no one and Andrei Shevchenko and Sergei Rebrov are well paid, well fed and well wintered through 20 practice matches in Germany, Italy, Cyprus and Israel. If there is unfamiliarity between Toshack and his new team in Madrid, Dynamo will exploit it.

Nevertheless, in all competitions, there will be caution in the first leg — and players under caution. Manchester's best news might not be that Ronaldo missed the plane, but that seven Inter players — including Baggio and Diego Simeone, David Beckham's likely adversary — start the match under the inhibiting factor of a yellow card.

**'Toshack
could be
five games
from glory'**

Branca gets all-clear

■ Six weeks after announcing the retirement of Marco Branca, Middlesbrough have agreed that the Italian striker can resume his career with them. Branca, 34, who sustained a serious knee injury last April, has been cleared to play by three surgeons.

■ France have agreed to play Northern Ireland at Windsor Park on August 18. The world champions are using the game as preparation for their European championship qualifying match against Ukraine in Kiev in early September.

■ Sunderland have submitted a planning application to increase the capacity of the Stadium of Light from 42,000 to 48,000 at a cost of £5.5 million.

FOOTBALL IN BRIEF

■ John Gorman, the former England assistant coach, has been appointed first-team coach at Ipswich Town. He succeeds Stewart Houston, who has moved to Tottenham Hotspur.

■ **Lionel Perez**, the Newcastle United goalkeeper, has returned to Tyneside after failing to agree personal terms with Lyons.

■ Chris Sutton, the Blackburn Rovers striker, promised yesterday that he would be at Ewood Park next season "whatever happens". Newspaper reports have linked Sutton with Chelsea.

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION

THE TIMES

NatWest

FANTASY FORMULA ONE

WIN A £40,000 TVR

ENTER TODAY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX

Fantasy Formula One is back and this year we've teamed up with NatWest to put you in the driving seat for what promises to be one of the most exciting championship series in years. The winner of our competition will receive a sensational TVR Cerbera 4.2 worth more than £40,000. This dream machine has a six-speed manual gear box, a top speed of over 160mph and does 0-60 in 4.2 secs. The winner also gets to choose a trip for two to any grand prix next season. Second prize is £10,000 cash and a trip for two to the 2000 Monaco GP. Third prize is £5,000 cash and a half-day pass to the 2000 British GP. The manager of the team scoring the most points in an individual GP will win a pair of half-day passes to the 1999 or 2000 British GP.

HOW TO PLAY

Choose a team of six racing drivers and six constructors, three from each of the four groups below. Entry fees are open now or you can take part by post. Select your team carefully. Wined one of your drivers wins a grand prix you score 80 points and there are 20 points for the winning constructor. There are also 30 points for starting at the front of the grid. In addition six races, starting with the Brazilian Grand Prix, carry up to 800 bonus points in our game for the team managers who pick correctly predict any of the first three drivers to cross the finishing line. Bad or late and failing to finish will incur penalties. A black flag loses you 20 points!

Silverstone
For details of events at Silverstone call 01327 657273

MAKE THREE SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THE FOUR GROUPS BELOW

DRIVERS

GROUP A

01 Mika Hakkinen	07 Eddie Irvine
02 Michael Schumacher	08 Olivier Panis
03 Damon Hill	09 Giancarlo Fisichella
04 David Coulthard	10 Jean Alesi
05 Alessandro Zanardi	11 Johnny Herbert
06 Jacques Villeneuve	

GROUP B

12 Ralf Schumacher	18 Jarno Trulli
13 IHH Frentzen	19 Rubens Barrichello
14 Alexander Wurz	20 Pedro Diniz
15 Mika Salo	21 Pedro de la Rosa
16 Ricardo Zonta	22 Luca Badoer*
17 Marc Gene	*Replaces Norberto Fontana

CONSTRUCTORS

GROUP C

23 McLaren	25 Williams	27 Benetton
24 Ferrari	26 Jordan	28 Sauber

GROUP D

29 Arrows	31 Stewart	33 Minardi
30 BAR	32 Prost	

24-HOUR ENTRY LINE: 0640 67 88 88

+44 370 901 4295 outside the UK

Calls last about seven minutes and must be made using a Touch-tone telephone (most telephones with * and # keys are Touch-tone). The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply. You will receive a 10-digit PIN as confirmation of your entry. You can enter at any time until noon on Thursday March 4, 1998 to qualify for the start of the Australian Grand Prix.

0640 calls cost 60p per minute (standard tariffs apply to +44 870 calls)

TO ENTER BY PHONE

Readers in the UK and Republic of Ireland must call 0640 67 88 88 (+44 870 901 4206 from RoI). Calls last about seven minutes and must be made by Touch-Tone telephone. Follow the instructions and tap in your 12 two-digit selections in turn. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply. Then give your team name (up to 16 characters) and details. You can enter until noon on Thursday, March 4, 1999 to qualify for the Australian Grand Prix.

TO ENTER BY POST

Complete the form, right, with your 12 two-digit selections. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply. To qualify for the start of the Australian Grand Prix, postal entries must be received by first post on Wednesday, March 3, 1999.

Promoter: News Phonetics Ltd, PO Box 4358, Virginia Street, London E1 6SY

THE TIMES NATWEST FANTASY FORMULA ONE ENTRY FORM

Complete this form with your credit-card details, or enclose a sterling cheque for £3 payable to *Fantasy Formula One*. (For readers resident outside the UK and Republic of Ireland the fee is £15.) Post it to: *The Times NatWest Fantasy Formula One*, Abacus House, Dudley Street, Luton LU1 1ZZ. Your entry must be received by Wednesday, March 3, 1999 to qualify for the start of Australian GP.

GROUP A AND GROUP B DRIVERS

1st	2nd	3rd

**Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms
BLACK CAPITALS PLEASE:** _____ Initials _____ Age _____
Surname _____
Address _____

GROUP C AND GROUP D CONSTRUCTORS

Team Name (maximum of 16 characters) _____

Postcode _____ Day tel _____
Credit Card Payment Card number:

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Expiry date

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Name on card _____
Supply address of registered cardholder on a separate sheet of paper if different from that above.
Signature _____ Date _____

I have read and accept the rules and wish to enter the *Fantasy Formula One* game.

1. On which days do you usually buy *The Times*?
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 Tuesday

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 Wednesday

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Thursday

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 Friday

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 Saturday

--

Don't usually buy *The Times*. 2. Which other National Daily Newspaper(s) do you wish to catch once a week?

3. Which National Sunday Newspaper(s) do you buy almost always (3-4 copies per month)?

4. Which National Sunday Newspaper(s) do you buy quite often (1-2 copies per month)?

If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by *The Times*, please tick ☐

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هكذا من الأهل

REVIEW



The plot? It's as carefully arranged as an ambassador's dining table. Twists, tensions, bonds and betrayals are deftly woven together so that their repercussions are rarely Tannoyed to us in advance. Even when we know that Alan will have to pay a price after confessing to his wife about

visiting prostitutes, we can't count on knowing where, when, or in what circumstances he will have to pay it. When Terry (Mark Strong) decided last night to take up Alan's offer of a job, but then later obeyed his wife over Alan, you knew that sooner or later Terry would have to pay for his betrayal, but you would never be able to guess how.

And when Alan craves a red Corniche in the window of a Rolls-Royce showroom at the start of the episode, you might have imagined that he would end up buying it. But you would never have dreamt that in the final scene it would by Terry's wife's body smashing against the Corniche's windscreen as Alan accidentally hits her in his rush to the police station to sort out the arrest of his daughter for trespass. It is like playing chess the lady with the lady-slayer and being shocked to find you're again and again. Staggeringly so.

Rug life is every bit as unpredictable

ble as fiction. Dr Robert Ballard also had no inkling of the likely consequences of his discovery in 1985 of the wreck of *Titanic*. Having devoted his life to finding the most famous wreck in the world — yes, even more famous than Keith Richards — Ballard is now one of the loudest voices opposing the lifting of artefacts from the wreck.

In Channel 4's entertaining film, *To The Ends of The Earth: The Battle for Titanic* — which seemed to lend support to Lew Grade's conclusion that when it comes to raising *Titanic* it can work out to be far less trouble to lower the Atlantic — Ballard likens it to "stripping the old lady of her jewellery in her grave".

Ballard clearly had no idea that his discovery would result in greed, obsession, Cold War intrigue, a cheesy TV special featuring some of the recovered relics

hosted by a tuxedoed Telly Savalas, courtroom battles, and Celine Dion. These in turn spawned their own unexpected *Titanic* consequences, including (a) more Britons choosing Celine Dion singing the theme to the movie *Titanic*, as their preferred choice of music at their funerals; and (b) worldwide fascination in Kate Winslet's bodyweight.

Yet... more unexpected consequences in *Tribe: The King of The Car Park*, a new BBC2 series about the way young people lead their lives; the main unexpected consequence being that those young boys and girls you coo over in their cot's might one day grow up into teenagers like Matthew and his pals, who think that spending your evenings in the car park is the way to live. Harlow, learning the bread off your dad's car tyres constitutes an enthralling social life. Even Graham's life has more going for it than this.

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport (7408294)
7.00 **WorldWar** Part eight. Integrating special needs pupils in mainstream education (T) (8329227)
7.30 **Millicent** (2044753)
7.35 **Winzelsa's House** (T) (4823482)
8.00 **Havazooze** (T) (2048005)
8.30 **Dappledeedle Farm** (T) (2045376)
9.00 **Instant Gardens** (4/14) (T) (2565983)
9.25 **Russell's Grant's Postcards** (4/25)
9.30 **The Oprah Winfrey Show** (3835163)
10.20 **Sunset Beach** Maria learns her memoir will return (T) (3826686)
11.10 **Lezza** (4064555)
12.00pm 5 News at Noon (T) (2049192)
12.30 **Family Affairs** Claire wakes up battered and bruised (T) (1427314)
1.00 **The Bold and the Beautiful** Claire breaks his deal with Jack (T) (8328598)
1.30 **The Rosennas** Show Entertainment magazine, 5 News Update (1426695)
2.00 **100 Per Cent Computer** (3005314)
2.30 **Good Afternoon Lifestyle** magazine; 5 News Update (1903802)
3.30 **Joshua's Heart** (TV/M 1990) Emotional drama about a woman who leaves her boyfriend, but can't bear to be parted from his son. Melissa Gilbert and Tim Matheson star. Directed by Michael Frooman (T) (6887996)
5.20 **Sunset Beach** Show earlier (T) (T); 5 News Update (3876192)
6.00 **100 Per Cent Computer** generated quiz (2849395)
6.30 **Family Affairs** Claire apologises to provoking Pete (T) (2630847)
7.00 5 News; Weather Round-up of the day's stories (T) (3827802)
7.30 **Champion of Nature** Conserving the natural habitat of the Canadian grizzly bear (T); 5 News Update (2629331)
8.00 **Crisis** Report on a report of a report of Albert Wilson, the Dover man in a death row in the Philippines (2/5) (3885560)
8.30 **What's the Story?** Vanessa Collivignone investigates the issues surrounding dangerous driving, with a look at appropriate punishments for offenders and safety measures to reduce the death toll; 5 News Update (3004685)
9.00 **Memphis Belle** (1989) Second World War drama chronicling the exploits of a clean-cut American B17 bomber crew who will be going home if they manage to complete their 25th and final mission to over Germany successfully. Starring Michael Madsen, Eric Roberts, John Lithgow, Harry Connick Jr, Tate Donovan and Billy Zane. Directed by John G. Catton-Jones (T); 5 News Update (8740208)
11.00 **Two Boats** lands Gun in trouble with the IRA, British Intelligence and the FBI. Directed by Michael Easton (T) (2754821)
11.55 **The Jack Docherty Show** With music by the Stereophonics (8106840)
12.35am **Live and Dangerous** Sports magazine (58046048)
3.45 **Asian Football Show** Weekly round-up (7842241)
4.40 **Prisoner: Cell Block H** Ann receives death threat (7330154)
5.30 **100 Per Cent** (T) (3004661)

For more details call VIDEO Plus+ on 0640 750710. Calls charged at 25p per minute at all times.

VIDEO Plus+, 14 Blacklands Trc, London, SW3 2SP

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● For further listings see Saturday's Vision

[illegible]

Adventures of Spot 12.05 Animal Show

Coronation Street 7.00 The Professionals
5.00 The Benny Hill Show 8.00 Sweeney
10.00 The Brian Conley Show 10.30
Big Blue House 12.55 The Toothbrush
Family 1.00 Bite Size 1.10 Rosie and Jim
1.30 The Big Garage 1.45 PB and J City

CARLTON SELECT

5.00pm What's Cooking? 5.30 Gridlock
5.00 London Bridge 5.30 Get Back 7.00
Pepper Ann 5.30 Smart Guy 6.00 Tee
Angel 6.30 Boy Meets World 7.00 F.L.H.
Mail to the Child (10pm-8pm Mon-Fri)

9.30 Flying Start 10.00 Peak Practice 11.00
Hill Street Blues 12.00am Us and Them
12.30 Good Luck 1.00 Close

DISNEY CHANNEL
 8:00am Gummi Bears R 25 Classic Toons

Aladdin 7.95 101 Dalmatians 8.00 Gool
Troop 8.25 Classic Toons 8.45 New

Adventures of Spot 9.05 Animal Shell 9.15
Pocket Dragons 9.30 Bear in the Big Blue
Jeans 9.35 The Toothbrush Family 9.35

Size 10.10 Rosie and Jim 10.30 The
3.00 Sesame Street 12.00pm The
10.30 Oggy and the Cockroaches 10.5
EekStravaganza 11.05 Bobby's Worl

11.30 Life with Louie 11.35 Home to 12.05pm Dennis and Goocher 12.05pm The Country 12.30 The New Adventures of Jungle Book 1.35 Ventura 1.55 The Incredible Hulk 2.25 The Country 2.50 X-Men 3.10 X-Files 3.35 SpideeMan 4.00 Goosebumps 4.25 Hero Turns: The Next Mutant 4.50 The Country 5.10 X-Men 5.30 Ato Ventura 6.00 Dennis Country 6.30 EwokSavage 6.55 The Country 7.00 Dennis

NICKELODEON

6.00dore Rudeo's Modern Life 6.30 The Country 6.55 The Country 7.00 Wild Thornberries 8.30 Arthur Children's BBC 10.00 Winnie's A Country 10.30 The Country 11.00 Magic School Bus 11.30 Pop Beatz! The Little Hedgehogs/Armed Animals 12.00 The Country 12.30 1.00dore in Pyjamas 1.30 Little Stone 2.00 Paddington Bear/Little Stone 2.30 The Country 3.00 BBC 3.30 Children's BBC 3.50dore Three Friends and Jerry 4.30 Rudeo's Modern Life 5.00 The Country 5.30dore Renton Reads 6.30 The Country

BRAVO

8.00pm Megal Man 9.00 Extreme Championship Wrestling 9.30 Cop's 10.00 Life Lounge 10.30 Cop's 10.50 11.00 FILM: The Postmaster (1930) 11.30dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00dore 4.30dore 4.50dore 5.00dore 5.30dore 6.00dore 6.30dore 6.50dore 7.00dore 7.30dore 7.50dore 8.00dore 8.30dore 8.50dore 9.00dore 9.30dore 9.50dore 10.00dore 10.30dore 10.50dore 11.00dore 11.30dore 11.50dore 12.00dore 12.30dore 12.50dore 1.00dore 1.30dore 1.50dore 2.00dore 2.30dore 2.50dore 3.00dore 3.30dore 3.50dore 4.00

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ATHLETICS 44

Why the millennium could make a world of difference to Lewis

SPORT

TUESDAY MARCH 2 1999

ROWING 50

Sharif faces up to a tall order in the Boat Race



Atherton and Thorpe among quartet given fortnight to prove fitness

England set World Cup deadline

BY RICHARD HOBSON

ALTHOUGH England became the first of the Test-playing countries to announce their squad for the World Cup yesterday, the 15 players named by David Graveney may not be those who open the tournament against Sri Lanka on May 14. In effect, the party amounts to little more than a declaration of hope and intent.

Four of those chosen — Michael Atherton, Graham Thorpe, Neil Fairbrother and Ian Austin — will undergo fitness tests within the next fortnight and if any of the quartet fails what Graveney described as "a rigorous assessment", a replacement will be announced on March 15.

The selectors have decided

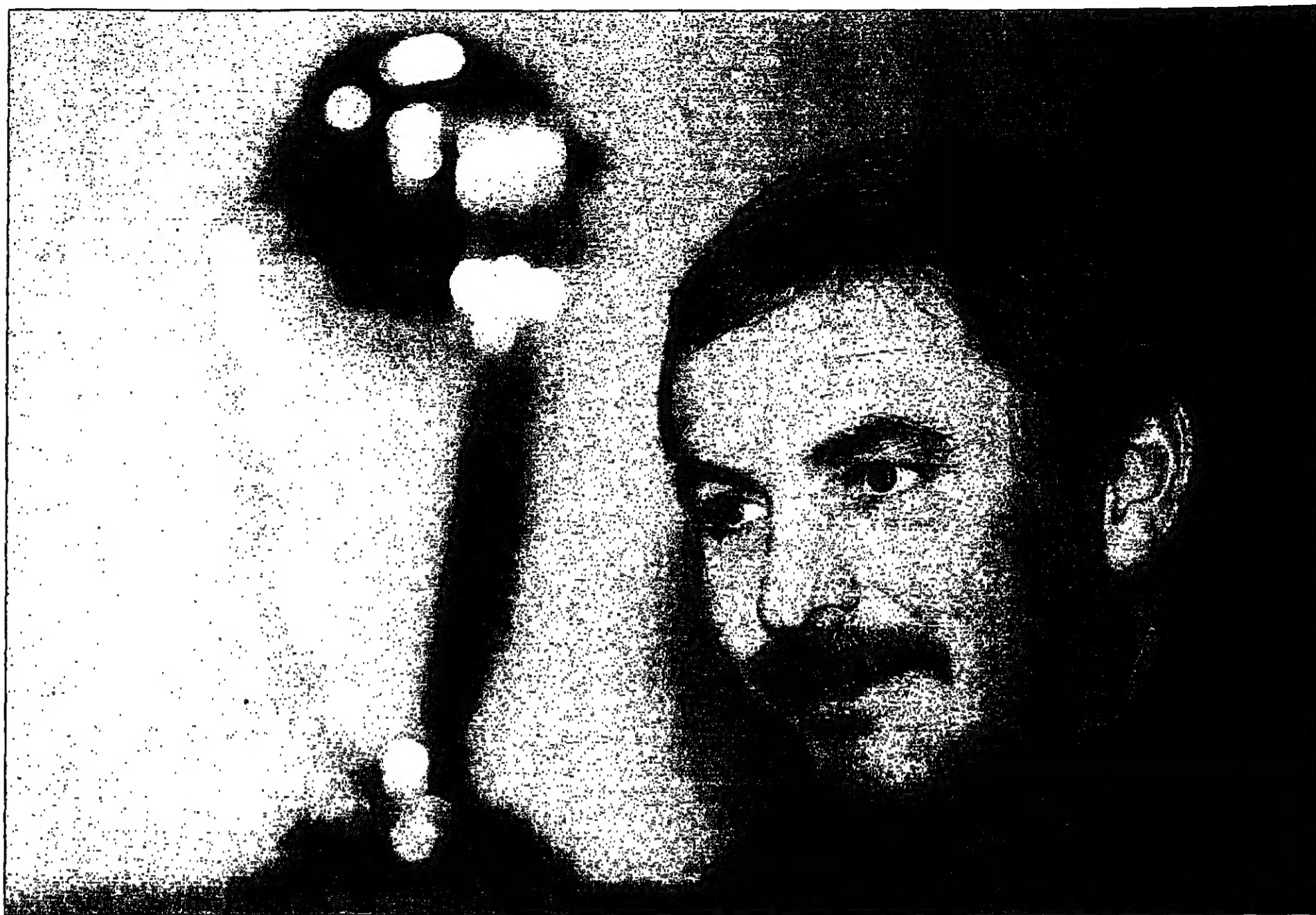
SQUAD

A J Stewart (Surrey), captain, M A Atherton (Lancashire), I D Austin (Lancashire), R D B Croft (Gloucestershire), M A Ballman (Kent), M H Fairbrother (Lancashire), A Flintoff (Lancashire), A R C Fraser (Middlesex), D Gough (Yorkshire), G A Hick (Worcestershire), A J Hone (Surrey), W V Knight (Warwickshire), A D Mitchell (Leicestershire), G P Thorpe (Surrey), V P Wells (Leicestershire).

to issue this early deadline even though the final 15 does not have to be lodged until March 31. There is still the provision to replace anybody injured during the Champions' Cup in Sharjah, a triangular tournament involving India, Pakistan and England, from April 8 to 16.

Graveney, the chairman of selectors, said: "On March 15 it will not be good enough to say: 'Oh well, they'll be alright in four or five weeks' time. If there is any doubt at all, we cannot afford to fudge the issue because the competition is too important. The frequency with which Atherton's back has been flaring up was considered, but he will be tested over a number of days and we are confident he will come through it."

The squad leaving for Sharjah via Pakistan on March 29 contains ten players who featured in the recent one-day series in Australia, plus Atherton, Thorpe, Austin, Andrew Flintoff and Angus Fraser. Vince Wells will act as the reserve wicketkeeper to Alec Stewart, the captain. Those who can consider themselves



Graveney, the chairman of selectors, said that no risks would be taken with players' fitness when he announced the squad yesterday. Photograph: Laurence Griffiths/Allsport

unlucky to have been omitted are Nasser Hussain and Dean Headley. Both were prominent in Australia and Graveney telephoned Hussain, as well as Mark Alleyne and Mark Ramprakash, to explain the decision yesterday morning. The omission of Ashley Giles means that Graham Hick will support Robert Croft in the spinner's role.

Graveney said that Atherton's back problem is different from the one that troubled him in Australia. As for Thorpe, he began a programme of rehabilitation specifically geared towards the World Cup when he left the tour before the third Test match in Adelaide.

With the exception of Hick, the batting left much to be desired in the subsequent one-day games. Fairbrother has become increasingly prone to hamstring problems while Austin has undergone a knee operation.

The white ball used for the tournament is notorious for swinging and seaming more than the red variety and Atherton's ability to work singles provides an alternative to batsmen who prefer to hit through the line. The latter group will struggle on overseas mornings. Equally, Fraser and Austin have been chosen to exploit these conditions.

Graveney said: "There were areas of our batting that caused concern in Australia. Atherton's record in this country

is impressive and Thorpe's absence from the middle order has been a big loss in five-day and one-day cricket. To go back to... two of our most experienced players makes sense."

Compared with the well-

drilled athleticism of Australia and South Africa, the squad does not inspire great confidence in the field, even with everybody fully fit. Graveney said, not entirely convincingly, that "weaknesses you may perceive will not be weaknesses."

Flintoff makes most of slim tour chance

FIGURES have not always been kind to Andrew Flintoff. When he last played for England, in the final Test match against South Africa at Headingley, he failed to score a run or take a wicket (Tussey Petropoulos writes).

Of greater concern was the condition of his lower back, which, with the excess weight he was carrying, had restricted his bowling. Flintoff probably benefited from having been omitted from the winter Test and one-day tour parties

to Australia, being sent instead to Zimbabwe and South Africa with the A team. He has been the outstanding batsman on the tour, averaging 78 in first-class matches, and the most effective one-day bowler. "I lost about 2st before coming on tour," he said. "I did a lot of training and got a lot fitter. It seems to have paid off. Now I'm getting back into it [bowling] again, it's given me a tremendous boost. Hopefully, I can bring it up to what it was before."

but he acknowledged that "our fielding will have to be up by 5 or 10 per cent."

Flintoff, 21, the Lancashire all-rounder, is uncapped at one-day level but he made two Test appearances against South Africa last summer. He owes his selection to an impressive A tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa, the decline of Ben Hollioake and the unpredictability of Chris Lewis. The decision occupied a good proportion of a meeting lasting six hours.

"We have lost six of our past seven one-day games and we felt that a new, young player was the right way to go," Graveney said. "We had to point out to him at the end of last summer the levels of fitness required to play international cricket. People who have seen him in domestic cricket have no doubt about his ability. He has lost weight and done what we asked. He gives us another option at No 6 and could open the batting."

Competition rules on the re-

placement of players come into force on May 2. After that date, a tournament panel of three doctors must assess any injury before approving a change, and the unfit player will not be allowed to return to the squad. England have been led to believe that they can replace somebody even if the injury is a recurrence of an old problem. In other words, Atherton could still be withdrawn during the tournament if his back flares up again, however many fitness tests he passes beforehand.

Cork back in field, page 49
Slater left out, page 49

FA asks to view Le Saux video

BY MATT DICKINSON AND STEPHEN WOOD

GRAEME LE SAUX'S hopes of avoiding detection and punishment for his sly assault on Robbie Fowler in the FA Cup Premier League match between Chelsea and Liverpool last Saturday were foiled yesterday when the Football Association asked the BBC for its videotape of the incident, in which the Chelsea defender appeared to elbow his Liverpool opponent in the back of the head.

The England full back can expect the minimum punishment of a three-match ban, but there will have been surprise and disappointment at Anfield last night at the revelation that Fowler is also likely to face action. Gerard Houllier, the Liverpool manager, has also been charged with misconduct for remarks that he was said to have made about Mike Read, the referee, who sent off Jamie Carragher in a match at The Valley last month, in which Charlton Athletic beat Liverpool 1-0.

Fowler, who was booked for a foul on Le Saux on Saturday, further enraged his opponent by turning his back on him at the subsequent free kick and then sticking out his backside. The FA may deem Fowler's taunting actions worthy of punishment, although he is unlikely to receive worse than a fine. Le Saux, who was cautioned for time-wasting during Chelsea's 2-1 victory, has little chance of getting off as lightly after another episode that has exposed how brittle his temper can be.

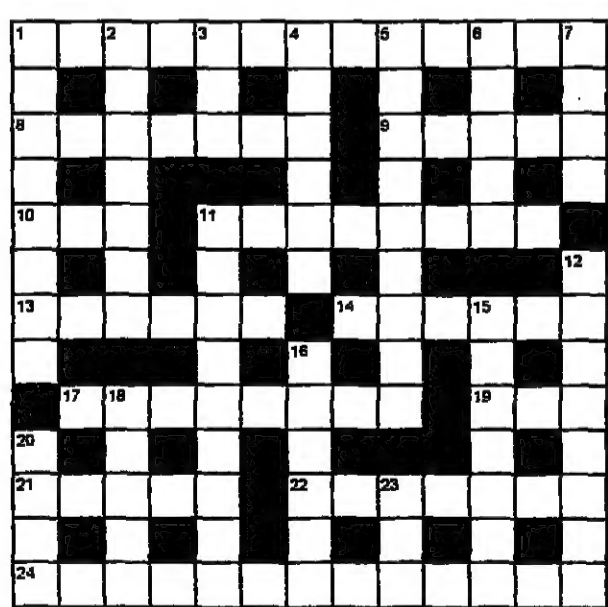
Hot-headed enough to punch David Barry, a Blackburn Rovers team-mate, during a European Cup match, Le Saux is not quite the aesthetically thinking man's footballer that he is often portrayed to be. He was also dismissed earlier this season after a brawl with Sebastian Perez at Ewood Park.

Fortunately for Chelsea, who are facing mounting disciplinary problems, any sentence imposed on Le Saux will not start until well after the FA Cup quarter-final against Manchester United at Old Trafford next Sunday, a game from which Frank Leboeuf, Dennis Wise and Celestine Babayaro will be missing.

Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-manager, is due to start a three-match suspension next week.

Ronaldo out, page 48

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1654

ACROSS

- 1 Getting one's way in tiny steps (6,7)
- 8 Back of skull (7)
- 9 Strange, non-citizen (5)
- 10 Prohibit (3)
- 11 Creator, not supreme, god (8)
- 13 Disinclined (10)
- 14 Senseless destroyer (6)
- 17 Charming, captivating (8)
- 19 Saucerless cup, one swindled (3)
- 21 Ballade final stanza (5)
- 22 Approve: sign back of cheque (7)
- 24 Sit down at last (3,4,4,2)

DOWN

- 1 Pleasure craft: Kern musical (4,4)
- 2 A permit (7)
- 3 Geog. plan (3)
- 4 Jap. matting (6)
- 5 (Liquid) solidify (9)
- 6 Sugary cake topping (5)
- 7 Slowly go down (4)
- 11 Abandonment (9)
- 12 File of mine waste (4,4)
- 15 Blameworthy conduct (7)
- 16 Preoccupy (6)
- 18 Dislodged turf (5)
- 20 Cannabis: plant for rope (4)
- 23 One Welsh, two Scot. rivers (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 1653

- ACROSS: 8 Nairobi 9 Mensa 10 Trousseau 11 Owe
12 Logic 14 Testify 15 Pretend 17 Bambi 19 Tun
20 Teddy bear 22 Corfu 23 Confine
DOWN: 1 Insult 2 Ciao 3 Horse chestnut 4 Divert
5 Impulse buying 6 Encomium 7 Napery 13 Greenery
15 Putsch 16 Deduce 18 Israel 21 Exit

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Celtic demand the dismissal of Farry over Cadete blunder

BY PHIL GORDON

FERGUS McCANN, the Celtic chairman, will walk away from the club about £40 million richer next month when he sells his shares in the former Scottish champions and leaves for Bermuda. Yet an equally prized item in his baggage might be the scalp of Jim Farry, the Scottish Football Association (SFA) chief executive, who was suspended by his employers yesterday as McCann basked in the glow of victory after a three-year battle to prove that Farry's negligence had cost them the services of Jorge Cadete, the Portuguese player, during the finale to the 1995-96 season.

Celtic have asked for Farry's removal as chief executive and there can be little doubt he faces a struggle to hold on to his job. The SFA halted an arbitration tribunal that had been examining the Cadete affair and released a statement yesterday, which admitted liability. It has also agreed to pay unspecified compensation to Celtic for the delays in registering Cadete in 1996.

John McBeth, the vice-president of the SFA, took barely a minute to read the statement, saying the case raised by Celtic "has been settled by the parties prior to completion of arbitration. The settlement is in favour of Celtic."

Not surprisingly, McCann

had much more to say on the subject. The Celtic chairman said that he felt vindicated, but added: "This should never have taken three years. It should have been resolved at the time."

Cadete was purchased in February 1996 from Sporting Lisbon to augment Celtic's push for the Scottish Premier League title, yet, despite the player's international transfer clearance (ITC) being received by the SFA from the Portuguese FA on March 7, 1996, Cadete was still not registered in time to face Rangers in a league match on March 17, instead of drawing 1-1.



Farry: Investigation

Celtic lost that match 2-1 and pursued it as the basis of their case against the SFA, which runs the competition. However, had Cadete — who scored five goals in six games when he was finally registered for the remainder of 1995-96 season and 33 goals the next season — not been prevented from playing, he may have had an influence on the destination of the title, too.

Celtic lost the league to Rangers by four points, a margin that would have been markedly reduced had they defeated their rivals in a league match on March 17, instead of drawing 1-1.



McCann vindicated

At the time, Celtic were told that Cadete's ITC was invalid. However, FIFA, the game's governing body, sent Farry a fax reaffirming that it was valid. Incidentally, a subsequent SFA inquiry absolved Farry of any blame.

Celtic's statement said yesterday that "Mr Farry's position is untenable" and that "he cannot be allowed to hold an exercise such powerful authority."

McCann would not comment on whether Farry had acted out of bias towards Rangers. "I would not want to attribute motives," he said. "However, there is no question that what happened was with intent. Whether that was obstinacy, incompetence or malice, I will leave up to you."

Farry also issued a statement yesterday, saying he was "co-operating with my employers in an additional investigation into issues raised by the dispute." There was no public apology from the SFA. It had undertaken that task earlier in the day, with a letter to Celtic from McBeth, stating that "as a consequence of failures by the chief executive... the registration had not progressed as it ought. The SFA acknowledges that had registration been given, the player [Cadete] would have been available to play against Rangers."

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